Virginia Wildlife

JULY 1974

VOLUME XXXV NUMBER 7

20 CENTS

Virginia Wildlife

Dedicated to the Conservation of Virginia's Wildlife and Related Natural Resources and to the Betterment of Outdoor Recreation in Virginia

Published by **VIRGINIA COMMISSION OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES,** ***Richmond, Virginia 23230***

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Observations, conclusions and opinions expressed in *Virginia Wildlife* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the members or staff of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries.

COVER: Hudsonian curlew, by Sabra M. Kimball of Melfa, Virginia.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: One year, $2.00; three years, $5.00. Make check or money order payable to Treasurer of Virginia and send to Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, P. O. Box 11104, Richmond, Virginia 23230.

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE is published monthly at Richmond, Virginia, by the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, 4010 W. Broad Street. All magazine subscriptions, change of address notices, and inquiries should be sent to Box 11104, Richmond, Va. 23230. The editorial office gratefully receives for publication news items, articles, photographs, and sketches of good quality which deal with Virginia's soils, water, forests, and wildlife. The Commission assumes no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts and illustrative material. Credit is given on material published. Permission to reprint text material is granted provided credit is given the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries and VIRGINIA WILDLIFE, but clearance also should be obtained from contributing free-lance writers, artists and photographers to reproduce their work.

Second-class postage paid at Richmond, Va.

EDITORIAL

The Laws of Ecology

AN ecosystem is like a knitted garment—each loop and fiber is important in keeping the whole thing from unraveling. Some look at this fabric from such a shortsighted range, however, that all they see is a haphazard bunch of yarn. It is such persons who pick at or allow others to pick at the fabric in the secure notion that a hole thus created to serve their special purposes will have no real effect on the strength of the garment. It is true that ecosystems can be simplified and complicated chains shortened, but to use our fabric analogy, if one were to make a bikini from a knit dress, a knitting needle and not scissors would be the proper approach.

In a recent article, titled "Ecosystems Are Circular," in the April issue of *American Forests,* Dr. Barry Commoner cites a good example of how we short-circuit an ecosystem. Casting humans in the role of predator and cattle as the prey, we get a cycle of energy from sunlight combining with soil nutrients in plants to produce beef eaten by man and the wastes returned as nutrients to the soil. "The human (in a primitive society) serves fundamentally as a means of converting cattle organic matter into soil organic matter."

If people move off the land into the city, then the cattle—or, more realistically, food in general—must be shipped into the city where it is converted by the population into sewage, which is delivered not to the soil but to the nearest river where it, in turn, drastically alters or destroys that aquatic ecosystem. To further compound our ecological ignorance we dig nutrients from the earth or refine them from fossil fuels to replace the lost nutrients. Somewhere in all this transportation and consumption of energy there is . . . "efficiency?"

Some people feel that to live in an ecologically sound manner we would all have to return to the status of hunter-gatherers. We don't have to abandon technology, but we can no longer count on it to bail us out when we ignorantly defy natural laws. "There is no ecological mandate that people live where their food is grown, but compensation must be made to the system because they don't. A technological society like ours must use more energy than required for the mere production of food and shelter, but we cannot continue to use it in such quantity and in such manner that the ecosystem cannot assimilate the by-products.

We are often like a child who has been caught in a lie and proceeds to embellish it with a half dozen more to extricate himself. Two wrongs don't make a right. We are going to have to face the fact that there is one right way but often many shortcuts which may seem cheaper and easier yet in the long run may prove to be neither. To survive we must choose a course which will best serve the interests of both humanity and ecology because we are, after all, part of the ecosystem.—H.L.G.

LETTERS

By Popular Demand

WHY can't we have the coverage of the Big Game Trophy contest as in past issues?

Melvin Mitchell
Forest

I enjoyed the Big Game Trophy Contest in October '73 even though I didn't have an entry. A lot of people worked hard on this, and I was disappointed no coverage was given in *Virginia Wildlife.*

Kermit Williamson
Newport News

IN the past you published photographs from the annual Big Game Trophy Contest but discontinued this practice in recent years. Why? I repeat, why did you do this to our deer hunters?

Millard Reese
Kinston, N. C.

Would you believe we didn't have a photographer at that time? This is no real excuse, however, and we'll try to make up for it with good coverage of this year's shows.—Ed.

Boaters Beware

I understand that Virginia honors North Carolina fishing and boating regulations on the interstate waters of Kerr Reservoir and the Dan River. This would mean that North Carolina boaters could operate their unregistered motorboats less than 10 hp in these waters. Right?

Michael Seamster
Providence, N. C.

Wrong! There is an interstate reciprocal agreement on fishing licenses and regulations, but there is no provision for other states' boating regulations at variance with those in Virginia. All states were given three years in which to comply with Federal standards and Virginia complied while North Carolina did not. Therefore we are arresting all boaters in Virginia who do not comply with Federal (Virginia) standards. This means that all motorboats must be registered and numbered, and boats over 16 feet must have a throwable flotation device on board in addition to the required wearable personal flotation device for each passenger.—Ed.

Not Enough

COMPLIMENTS to your fine magazine, *Virginia Wildlife,* and its many articles about hunting and fishing. However, I regret that you do not publish enough letters. Usually only two, and at the most three, are published. Since these letters tell what the readers think, would it be too much to ask if you would devote at least a page to them?

Tommy DeMayo
Winchester

You write 'em and we'll print 'em! We do get a lot of mail, but not many readers write to us for the purpose of sharing their thoughts with other readers.—Ed.

LITTLE LAKES THAT RATE BIG

By BILL COCHRAN
Roanoke

Gatewood Reservoir

DURING a recent camping trip, my family pegged a tent along the shoreline of scenic Gatewood Reservoir, a 162 acre impoundment west of Pulaski, and saw more deer than campers. The score during a two-day, mid-week visit in August was 3 to 0 in favor of the deer.

Gatewood can't be considered a modern day Walden Pond, but the 12 year-old impoundment has managed to maintain its beauty and remoteness at a time when some recreation facilities are groaning under overuse. There are other lakes of similar size across western Virginia that receive little of the fanfare attributed to big reservoirs like Smith Mountain, Kerr, Gaston, Philpott, Claytor and South Holston. I've learned to love them not only for their scenic value and tranquility, but also for the fine fishing they offer.

One such impoundment is the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries-owned Laurel Bed Lake, a pewter-colored body of water shaped like a 330-acre meat platter and hidden 3,600 feet high in the Clinch Mountains that roll loftily north of Saltville. The lake has been producing some of the finest brook trout this side of the Maine northwoods.

Among Virginia's newest small lakes is 100-acre Rural Retreat Lake, a Y-shaped body of bluish-black water in Wythe County. A warm water impoundment, it offers fishing for bass and bluegills.

Additional small western Virginia lakes include Willis Robertson Lake in Rockbridge County, Hidden Valley Lake in Washington County, Scott-Wise Lake in Scott County, and Douthat Lake in Douthat State Park near Clifton Forge. The ones mentioned previously, however, are my favorites.

Virginia's small lakes are special attractions to recreationists who desire to escape the noise and speed of powerboats. The impoundments are off limits to gasoline-powered boats, meaning boaters must paddle their own or be hummed along by noiseless electric motors. This restrictive mode of travel not only keeps the lakes quiet and pure, but it makes them appear to be considerably larger than they really are.

Gatewood Lake offers johnboats for rent, along with electric motors and batteries to push them along. No boats except the rental ones are permitted on the lake, but you can use your own electric motors.

Although it is only about 10 miles west of Pulaski, and the town's major water supply, Gatewood is little known even in its own drainage. To reach it, you travel west out of Pulaski on West Main Street, take a right on Magazine Street, then left on Mt. Olivet Road, and you climb and wind your way to the edge of the Jefferson National Forest. A rustic sign bearing "Gatewood Park" points to the right and takes you down a remote road tucked away in the tall timber that ends at the lake's edge.

On my most recent trip, it was here I met H. B. Cox Jr., the concessionaire, who had 18 johnboats for rent, 50 new campsites and a picture of a whopping 11 pound largemouth caught from the lake. Such a bass isn't an average catch, by any means. The lake is not to be confused with a brackish, stump-studded bass factory. It is deep and cool, and most challenging of all, it is clear—crystal clear. At 10 feet, a largemouth almost could tell the difference between a Hellbender and Waterdog lure simply by reading the brand name. Fortunately, bass don't read well, but they do have excellent eyesight, which means an angler had best go after them with a lightweight line shrouded by the semi-darkness of dawn or dusk or a heavy rainstorm.

During one evening of fishing, I used both dusk and rain to camouflage my assault. Casting a Little Scooper, a lure that imitates a crayfish, I landed a half-dozen bass in about 40 minutes, before darkness made it impossible to determine where the blackness of the water ended and the blackness of the shoreline took over. That many bass indicate a good population, but the water is so clear they are a super-challenge to catch.

The bread and butter fish at Gatewood is the bluegill, although the impoundment does not have the appearance of rich bluegill water. Cox recently measured one

12½ inches long weighing over two pounds.

Although in a national forest setting, Gatewood lake is owned by the town of Pulaski, it being that municipality's major water supply. No swimming is permitted. The concession, under town regulations, charges modest camping and boating fees.

Newer than Gatewood, Laurel Bed Lake was built by the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries back in the late 1960's, on the headwaters of Big Tumbling Creek. The impoundment rapidly became one of Virginia's best brook trout waters, producing a number of catches in excess of two pounds. Ironically, it wasn't exactly planned for doing that. Its primary purpose is to provide an additional dry weather flow of water for downstream Big Tumbling Creek, the commission's highly popular fee-fishing trout stream.

The trout, stocked annually, wax hefty on the lake's rich food supply, growing blocky bodies, small heads and sides dressed in rich colors. The fact that they aren't easy to catch turns the crowds away. A typical weekend day will see 1,200 anglers along Big Tumbling Creek, but only about a dozen at Laurel Bed Lake.

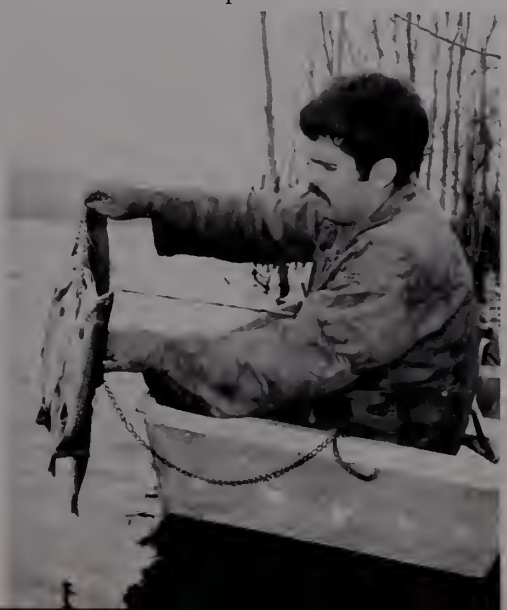
Richard and I have found our best angling in the springtime, when the trout take small spinners such as the Roostertail fished with two- to four-pound line. Come summer, the fish grow more difficult to catch, but good spots to take them are at the mouth of the small tributaries that trickle into the lake.

From the opening of the trout season through Labor Day anglers must obtain a $1 daily fishing permit to fish the lake, the same permit required of Big Tumbling Creek fishermen. The permits are available at a small concession stand along the creek as you enter the Big Tumbling area. It is reached by turning off Interstate 81 at the Chilhowie exit and following Virginia 107 north to Saltville. At Saltville, turn left on Virginia 91, then right onto 634 (Allison Gap), left on 613 and right on 747. A 20-site campground is available.

Hoping to land a record brookie, Richard and I returned to the lake this past fall.

Like Gatewood Lake, Laurel Bed is limited to cartop boats which may be paddled or propelled by an electric motor. Outboards are prohibited. There are no rental boats so you must bring your own or fish from the bank.

Bluegill makes youngster happy at Rural Retreat Lake.



Richard Pauley admires string of colorful brook trout caught at Laurel Bed Lake.

Richard and I found a boat to be an advantage. We worked mine along the impoundment's edge, where we cast spinners that caught the glint of the sun. However, we found ourselves enjoying everything but the privilege of landing a trout. Our confidence in catching a record brook trout had given way to wondering if we'd even be able to hook enough average brookies to fill our black skillet at breakfast time.

Finally, when the evening shadows began to lengthen, we paddled into a cove where the water began to dimple with feeding trout. We tried spinners without luck, then stooped to worms and quickly caught eight just before dark stopped the action. They were small, but colorful and welcome. We had our breakfast.

To the east of Laurel Bed is Rural Retreat Lake, a Y-shaped body of bluish-black water that offers fishing for largemouth bass, bluegills and channel catfish, along with camping, limited boating and picnicking. The commission-owned lake is nestled in the rolling hills south of Rural Retreat not far off Interstate 81. This 100-acre impoundment was opened to fishing April, 1972, and for a time produced countless bass just under the 12-inch minimum size limit.

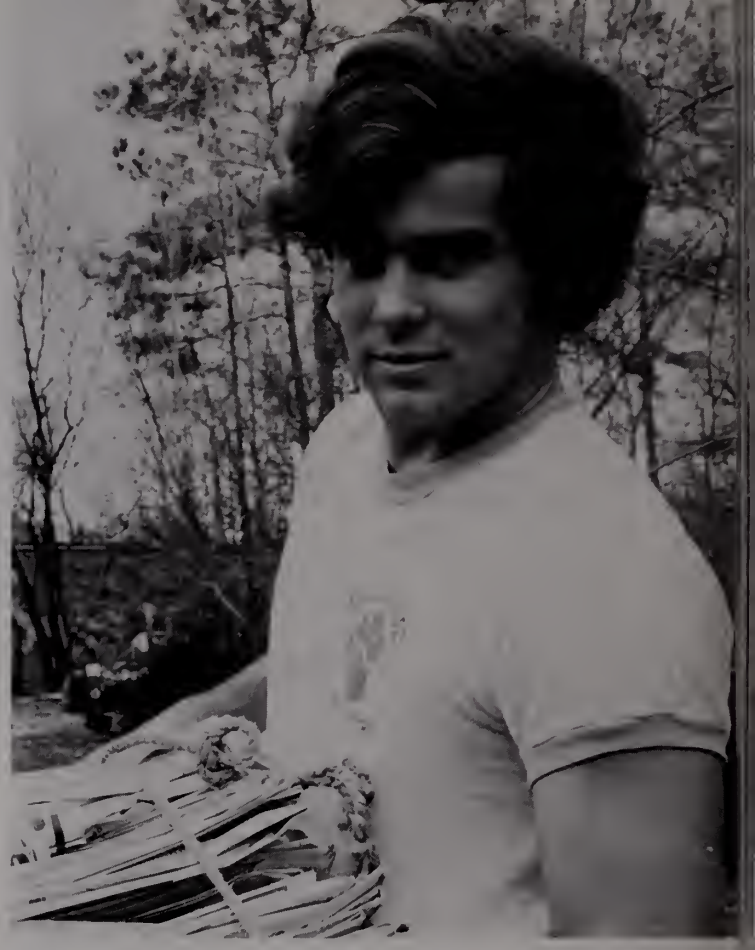
On my first visit, shortly after the facility opened to angling, I fished with Harry Umberger, the lake's congenial concessionaire. While Harry kindly maneuvered one of the aluminum johnboats he has available for rent, I used ultralight tackle to cast a Meatgetter. This is a small, weedless spinner onto which is hooked a thin inch-long sliver of meat carved out of the side of a fresh-caught bluegill. The offering readily was gobbled up by both bass and bluegills.

Fishing pressure is heaviest on weekends. Most of the anglers are bank fishermen, so the serious caster will do well to rent a boat or bring his own small rig. Gasoline motors are prohibited. A roomy campground is located on a knoll above the lake; Harry hopes someday to have a swimming pool there. Swimming is not permitted in Rural Retreat, a little lake that, like the others, rates big in my affections.

TO BE A CONSERVATIONIST YOU HAVE TO

GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY

BY KEVIN JONES
Richmond



IT happened one afternoon when I was riding with my father back in the fall of seventy-two. It was a beautiful afternoon. The sun was dipping below the trees, and a light breeze was stirring. I felt as if I were traveling through untouched virgin woods. Then I saw the unmistakable sign of man: his trash. It was piled high around and behind a sign with the letters, "NO DUMPING." When I saw this, I knew I had to do something, anything to help curb pollution and erosion.

Long active with the Scouts, I had been giving some thought to trying for the William T. Hornaday Award, a special award given for outstanding work in conservation. Perhaps this program would allow me to put my ideas into practice and quiet this growing feeling inside me that I should do something to preserve and protect this earth we share.

I started my work on one specific problem, and, as it progressed, I noticed environmental improvement was needed everywhere. On every hand I saw erosion, pollution or degradation of some sort. Within a short time, I realized that there is more to being a conservationist than simply running one's mouth saying, "Something ought to be done." It means one has to be willing to get his hands dirty.

Many people could employ worthwhile conservation measures in their own yards. Cleaning up a stream and checking erosion might seem small but little things add up.

I first contacted the Game Commission and they put me in touch with Mr. F. H. Settle, a game biologist in Tappahannock who later met with me, went over the projects, and helped me set them up.

Mr. Settle and I looked at a piece of property in Caroline County where I hoped to start my work. Since I had a strong desire to improve conditions for game, my first projects were to plant game bird seed in some fallow fields, curb erosion and build wood duck and squirrel boxes. Planting of the game bird seed was tackled first. Just like any other type of planting, one has to turn the ground, so I contacted a farmer across the way who said he would be glad to plow and disc the plots for me. He also said that he would not charge since it was for conservation.

A dirt road passes the planting site and a little farther east is a dam. It lies perpendicular to the road, and at the opposite end of the dam there was this terrific erosion problem which I vowed to alleviate.

I rounded up some help from my scout troop and we built check dams in the gulleys, broke up the hard dirt so it could be planted with sericea, lespedeza, Kentucky 31 fescue and rye grass. At the end of the day we were proud of our work, but only to find ourselves disappointed and mad the next week.

When we returned, the place was torn up. All the check dams were maliciously destroyed. The scouts were really upset, but we took it in stride and rebuilt the dams and reseeded the area. The following week the same thing happened, but this time we caught the culprits. They lived right across the road and they would ride their motorcycles over the area. They destroyed the dams simply because they were in the way. We pleaded with them to leave the dams alone next time and they finally agreed they would. With this encouragement we rebuilt them again.

About this time the seeds arrived for my bird fields and, I might add, they were free, provided they were used as directed, and can be obtained from the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries. Mr. Settle also sent me two types of bushes to plant along with the seed, autumn olive and bicolor lespedeza. They were

Doing things for wildlife is a fun project for most young people. This scout troop got a lot of satisfaction out of helping me build and place wood duck boxes.

no more than sticks, but two to three weeks later I was pleased to see they were growing very fast.

When I really began to look around, I realized I had conservation problems in my own yard. I know that probably a couple of these problems are shared by many, and some people may be at odds as to what to do about them. My solutions may help.

In the rear of my yard flows a creek that often floods. The creek makes a little bend into my yard then back out again. One would not think, if he saw the creek, that it could cut about 8 feet from the yard. I dug a ditch which lessened the bend and would take the water straight, bypassing the eroded bank. To keep the water from flowing in the old course I constructed a wall out of old pieces of curb, which someone had dumped in the woods. I continued my work by refilling the eroded area with fill dirt, topping it off with topsoil.

Later I realized I had created another problem in solving the first. In straightening the channel I increased the velocity and force of the creek in floodstages, therefore increasing the erosion downstream.

Everything was working so well that we knew something was bound to happen, and it did. Disaster struck. The rain came down in torrents; all I could think of was my creek. When the rain let up, I checked my creek and discovered that it had jumped the wall and washed out all my fill dirt.

I reconstructed the wall at a lesser angle, hoping to alleviate the problem of the washing. I also added height to it for extra protection. The second attempt appears to be a success since flooding has not bothered it any more, and the trees are living although the grass is slow in coming.

Almost everyone who has trees in their yard has a problem with acorns. What to do with the acorns: Well, you can throw them away or dump them with your leaves, but if you want to do something for the animals and birds you will bag them when you pick them up. Ducks love acorns. So we bagged them and dumped them in a marsh for duck food. You could also stockpile them for squirrels.

Another problem in our world today is the increasing demand on our forests and woodlands. Papermills must constantly cut trees for newsprint and paper. Newspaper should be recycled, thereby saving some trees. It is not that hard a task to save newspaper. Just pile it up; and when you're ready, take it to a newspaper recycler and sell it. There is Goldman Paper Stock Co. in Richmond, and other recyclers throughout Virginia.

Now don't say to yourself, "Well, I don't have any of these problems so I don't need to concern myself." You do. The better you make living conditions for others, the better yours will be made. All you have to do is look around you and use your head.

To borrow an appropriate phrase with the switch of a word, "Conservation is not a sometime thing; it is an all-the-time thing." With all the environmental crises that surround us today, it is very much worth our while to go out of our way and get our hands dirty. After all, you do want to be able to live on earth in the future, do you not? If everyone of us will adopt the simple truth that 'I can save the earth' we will realize how much we can achieve together.

Recyling paper is something anyone can do. Young people are eager to help if someone will only help them get organized. Think of it as saving trees. Although trees are a renewable resource, the demand may soon exceed the supply.

SOURWOOD
Oxydendrum arboreum

By ELIZABETH MURRAY
Charlottesville

Illustrated by Lucile Walton

IN the spring we are all so breathless for the first signs of plant life that we savor every bloom and leaf as it opens. Perhaps this is why the early shrubs and trees, shad, redbud, dogwood, maple, etc., are so much better known than the ones which come out later. By midsummer there is such luxury of growth and greenery all over the countryside that individual details of what is blooming sometimes escape unremarked.

It is a pity, however, that sourwood should pass unnoticed just because it blooms rather late. It is a most attractive tree and well worth our attention. *Oxydendrum arboreum,* known variously as sourwood, sorrel tree or titi, is a member of the heath family, the Ericaceae, that large and important group in our area which includes the rhododendrons and azaleas, mountain laurel, the blueberries and huckleberries, fetterbush, wintergreen, trailing arbutus and heather itself.

Sourwood grows as a small tree 20-60 feet high. The trunk is straight with slightly ridged, gray-brown bark. The branches are spreading and somewhat pendulous or downward hanging. The alternate leaves are a bright dark green, lance-shaped tapering to a fine point, and have finely serrated edges. In October they turn a brilliant scarlet, making an extremely handsome fall sight. The creamy white flowers are borne in profusion in one-sided clustered racemes or sprays at the ends of the branches of the most recent year's growth. Each flower is tiny, not more than ¼ inch across, with the special urn shape which is characteristic of a number of members of the Ericaceae, fetter-bush, wintergreen, blueberries and some heathers. Both calyx and corolla are five lobed; there are 10 stamens and a five-celled pistil with a short terminal stigma.

The flowers produce nectar which is keenly sought after by honeybees. From their labors the clear, much prized sourwood honey is produced. In contrast to the nectar, the foliage is acid to the taste and can be chewed to relieve thirst. This acid flavor gives the plant both its common name, sourwood, and its generic name from the Greek *oxys* meaning sour, and *dendron* meaning wood or branch.

The wood of *Oxydendrum* is heavy, hard and close-grained, quite a light brown in color. It will take a high polish and has been used for tool handles, turned articles and bearings of machinery.

Sourwood is perfectly hardy in the North and is often planted as an ornamental. However, its natural range is mainly in the South from Pennsylvania along the Allegheny Mountains to Florida and Alabama, westward through Ohio to southern Indiana, and southward through Arkansas and Louisiana to the coast. It likes open, well-drained deciduous woodlands, and can be found as high up as 3,500 feet in the mountains. The flowers bloom in June and July and are well worth stopping for, in spite of all the other things that there are for us to admire in the woods at this time of year.

Earthworms

WHEN YOU NEED THEM

By ERIC CAMERON
Montreal, Quebec

IF a neighborhood youngster supplies you with worms for bait at a reasonable price, you have no problem, but knowing something about the living habits of earthworms can often provide fresh bait when you need it and can't buy a supply.

Earthworms feed on the top layer of soil composed of decaying leaves and plant matter, but they live and burrow in the under layer consisting of minerals and particles of organic matter. Searching for worms on a smooth, well-clipped lawn usually is a waste of time. The worms find very little nourishment because most people rake up dead leaves from their lawns. The result is that the worms migrate to areas where there is a more abundant supply of food, such as in the longer grass bordering the lawn near trees and shrubs.

One method of maintaining a constant stock of worms is to pile dead leaves in one corner of the lawn or back yard. Earthworms like the warmth generated by the fermentation of plant matter, as well as the convenient food supply. In time, most of the worms from all around the lawn will congregate at the spot and burrow new homes for themselves underneath the leaf pile. Catching them then becomes relatively easy.

Looking for worms when you're out in the country can be a nuisance. In pastures and fields where cattle graze, worms will often gather on cool evenings under cow manure because of the heat generated by fermentation. In freezing weather, when most worms head deep into the earth to escape the frost, many continue to live comfortably throughout the cold weather in the big manure heaps found behind barns.

Stones exposed to the sun absorb heat and transmit it to the soil below. Such stones are favorite gathering places for worms. But because the worms generally remove soil from under the stones, they eventually sink right down into the ground and become covered. Once their heating qualities are lost, they are deserted by their earthworm tenants. When you run out of fresh bait in the field, turning over flat stones and small rocks is a likely way of locating worms in a hurry.

The biggest worms are generally found on the edges of soil patches where the ground is comparatively hard and the available food supply sufficient for only a few worms. Where there is a good supply of food there are plenty of worms, but they're inclined to be of similar size and relatively small.

A good time to look for the big dew worms favored by big fish is after a heavy rain. A downpour invariably brings them to the surface—even in daylight—because their burrows become flooded and they must vacate them or risk drowning.

Chemical solutions have been marketed which, it is claimed, will bring worms shooting up to the surface when the solution is poured down worm tunnels. The same results can be obtained with a solution of mustard powder and water, according to some old-timers. But many of the worms do not survive the "treatment."

Why is it that worms slide back down their tunnels so quickly when you try to catch them? They have no eyes, yet a coating of light-sensitive film enables them to differentiate between night and day. A shadow falling across the worm in daylight may serve as a danger signal. When a flashlight beam strikes their bodies at night, the same effect is produced. Sea worms react in the same way. The use of a red light seems to be less disturbing because the worms seem to be less sensitive to red light rays.

Vibrations in the soil, such as footsteps, are easily picked up by worms and sometimes at a surprisingly long distance. So it's wise to tread softly when stalking your bait.

How to keep earthworms alive once you have a stock of them? They seem to be able to survive for a long time without any visible nourishment. But if you want to fatten them up quickly, sprinkle some breakfast cereal and a little greasy dishwater on the soil of their container. Some worm growers use soda pop because the worms appear to like the dissolved glucose in the liquid. Covering the box with moist dead leaves is just as effective; as long as they have a good supply of food and are not disturbed, the worms will not try to escape.

Keep the worm container in a cool, dark place like a cellar. Once the soil starts drying out, the worms will try to migrate. So keep them happy by keeping the soil damp. When you go fishing or have to transport earthworms for several days, pack them in damp peat moss with a sprinkling of moist soil. Never leave the container sitting in the sun or they are liable to be roasted —and useless for bait!

MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN

INTERESTING SENECA VALLEY

Early one morning at break of dawn . . . I went to the top of the mountain, to pray . . . To wash my face in a passing cloud . . . and give thanks for another day . . .

IF the High Sheriff went into Seneca looking for Lewis M. Witt, he would probably be butterfly netted and turned upside down for a copy of the search warrant. But 'Bussie' Witt, yes. Been trapping most of his life. Searches for ginseng, and does pretty well some of the time. Knows more about these mountains than any man alive. Witt was born over in Mayberry, West Virginia, in 1924. Before he was two years old his family moved to Elliston; later, into Seneca. His late father, a deep lover of the Good Earth, took the responsibility to his son with chapter eleven verse nineteen of Deuteronomy: "And ye shall teach them your children . . . speaking to them . . . when thou walkest by the way." This was the beautiful upbringing of our Man Of The Mountain.

It was a year ago that I came into the Roanoke Valley community of Elliston, the little village-town nestled roughly fifteen miles south, southwest of the star city of Roanoke. Routes 460 west and 11 south cut through the township.

The ridge where Burvill Gordon first saw the cat.

When Elliston's friendly postmaster, Kelly Mitchell, hands me my mail, he sometimes turns on a grin and remarks about the address of my new-found peapatch—Poverty Manor in Seneca Valley, 24087. It was more by accident than design I ran into Brother Witt soon after my move. Looking for a spot to park my car on the narrow Seneca road, I saw this man on the side of his front porch in apparent meditation. The moment he saw me close my car door he beckoned me to him. We shook hands and I limped onto a chair. Could I leave my car somewhere near the water's edge and bathe my foot? He took one look at my badly swollen ankle and said, "Let's go now. Leave your car right where it is. Don't worry about locking it; nobody fools around in Seneca. We are a law unto ourselves here."

'Bussie' Witt is a powerful built man who's probably never lost an argument. We walked to a concrete bridge where I could sit and drop my feet over the side into the swirling waters, in the hope of pressuring down the tight and swollen ankle. Witt didn't say anything at first. Then, apparently studying the water treatment, he said: "You'll know a difference tomorrow. This river is generous." Nothing more, just that.

Twenty-four hours later, the swelling of the infected foot had almost totally abated; and Dr. George Smith of Shawsville was fast losing a new customer. The day before, the friendly doctor had agreed if the riverflow pressure worked, then I could cancel the appointment.

One day 'Bussie' and I made the consuming climb to the top of Joe Stewart's Mountain. We walked, he talked, and I listened. "I must have been about six years old when my Dad took me for maybe a mile-long trip on that mountain-top across yonder. He was looking for that rare ginseng. It paid off, even then. I guess I remember everything, just about, that he told me." This ginseng sold last November for $3.50 an ounce. Witt collects, dries, and sells the rare precious root. It has been reported that China's present ruler, Mao Tse-tung, uses it as a product for longevity. It is a

native product of Manchuria. 'Bussie' and I would walk again soon atop Stewart's Mountain.

During the beautiful Indian Summer period of late last October I decided to explore deep into Seneca on the narrow, winding roads through a mountain split half in two by modern bulldozers; then on across Interstate 81, as it rips a wide hundred and fifty foot flowing path of civilization through these mountains. Then a re-entry into the past—into the peace and tranquility of the lower western end of Coffee Valley, within five minutes' reach of nearby Ironto. I veered to the left and took a lonesome road that seemingly would lead to nowhere. It led me to the old home place of Burvill and Dorothy Gordon, who still live here.

Burvill, who pleads only to seventy-nine years young, was chopping down some trees on a hillside across from the house. He dropped his work, came over and shook hands. "Could be a hard winter if the Almanac is right this time," he volunteered. In a woodshed about fifty feet from his kitchen door, he was piling his fuel-wood for the old fireplace and woodstove for cooking.

Turning to Burvill Gordon, I asked him if he had ever encountered bears, rattlers or panthers near here. He replied: "No bears, no rattlers, but panther, yes." He pointed to the some seven-hundred-foot high ridge to the west: "Been a few months ago that I spotted him a-just a-layin' up there, sort of relaxin'. All of a sudden he gets up and begins to take long leaps—I'd say about twenty to thirty feet high."

Down the road 'a piece' I pulled over and sized up the terrain of Gordon's Mountain with its maybe two-thousand yard ridge that ran into Snider's Mountain, ending in a pinnacle of beauty of spotted rock-structure —a perfect perch for Old Puddinhead to locate the wild game he must kill . . . to survive.

It now seemed that I could establish one important item: the panther's stomping grounds were in this valley zone, and his observed movements covered less than a mile. Disappointment was soon replaced with new hope. I counted five mountains that sort of rimmed in his enclosure. The big cat wouldn't likely move out of these pleasant surroundings. Neither would he likely want to ford the swirling headwaters of the North Fork, which would too easily put him dangerously close to Ironto. Now, if we could hazard a guess as to where his den was. Carl Snider pointed up to some rough but attractive stone formations and said: "We think that's where he is." Lo and behold, it appeared to be about seven hundred feet high, with a possible eighty-degree angle climb!

Back in Seneca I searched all over the place for 'Bussie.' When I found him several hours later, he appeared reluctant to track the cat. Early training by his father began to show: "Unless he has hurt somebody, or threatens some children, I wouldn't want to shoot him." I relieved his concern by showing him the official version of the Federal Law protecting the

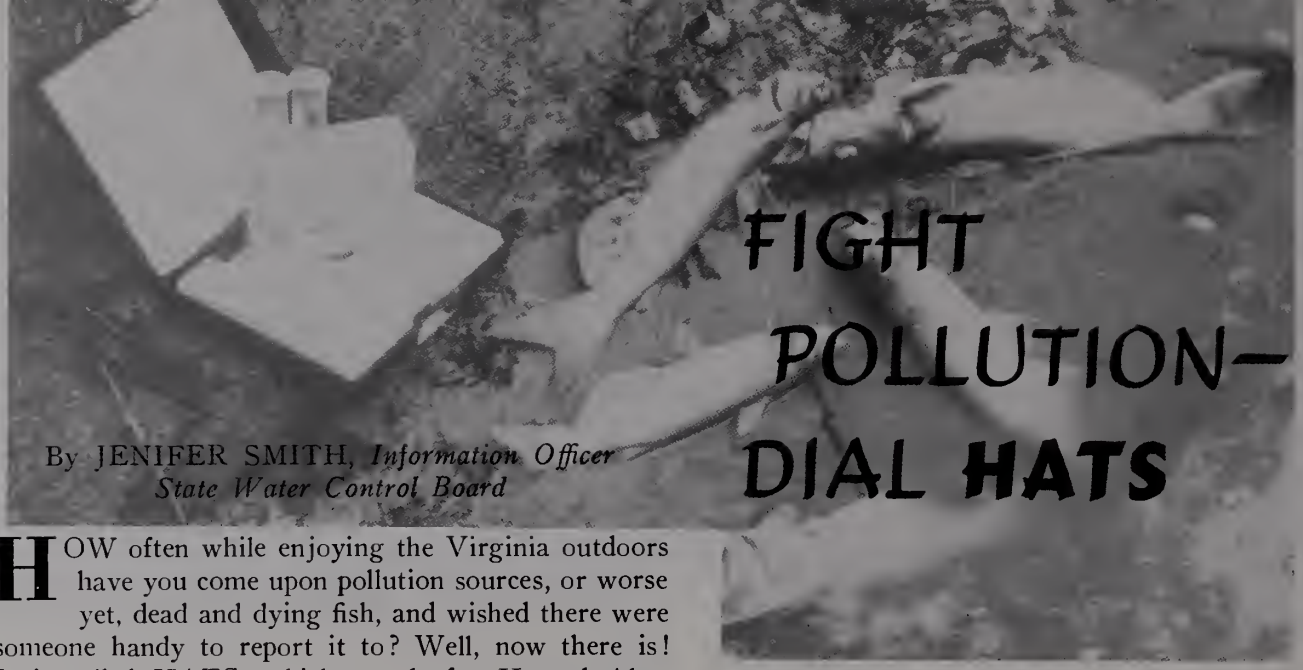
Author Bill McNamara, left, swaps stories with Burvill Gordon. He and his sister Dorothy were generous with their mountain hospitality.

panther. I would carry only cameras and moulding-plaster equipment to cast his tracks, if we found any.

January Fourteenth: 'Bussie' and I began to scale the steep wall that would lead us . . . to the panther's den? We made it clear to the top—a place of sheer, incredible beauty—then had to drop back down about twenty feet over the rock structure to the den. Could the cat squeeze through that hole in the pinnacle rock? We began to have our doubts. If our estimates of his measurements were anywhere near correct, he'd weigh at least a hundred pounds, be five feet long, possibly fourteen to sixteen inches across his chest. I began to take pictures.

There are at least nine families living in the perimeter of the elusive panther. So long as he does not attack or molest them, the chances are good that he can live in peace with the natives. With the Federal statute protecting him, you are not likely ever to see headlines: FULLER BRUSH MAN BAGS PANTHER. And Heaven forbid that you should pick up the headlines: PANTHER BAGS FULLER BRUSH MAN. . . . Amen . . . amen.

Bussie Witt poses with some of his trophies at his home in Seneca Valley. He uses his woodland know-how to produce some cash from furs and ginseng.



FIGHT POLLUTION—DIAL HATS

By JENIFER SMITH, *Information Officer*
State Water Control Board

HOW often while enjoying the Virginia outdoors have you come upon pollution sources, or worse yet, dead and dying fish, and wished there were someone handy to report it to? Well, now there is! It is called HATS, which stands for Hazard Alert Team Standby and represents a team of water quality experts standing by like the Fire Department, waiting for your call. They are available on a 24-hour-a-day basis to rush out and do something about the problems you report. As hunters, hikers, fishermen, or nature lovers, you represent our most conscientious conservationists and are the people the State Water Control Board counts on the most to help spot water pollution problems and to make its emergency pollution complaint program work.

If you should see a number of dead fish or fish in distress while out on the water this summer, call the State Water Control Board. Dead fish in the water are often a sign of water pollution. If your report indicates something abnormal or illegal, it will be investigated.

While the Board has monitoring programs to assess continuing biological and chemical quality of Virginia's streams, the HATS program handles emergency situations that usually arise from waste treatment plant malfunctions, accidental spills, and other sudden pollution sources. When you see evidence that something like this has happened, that is your big chance to do your bit to help keep Virginia's waters clean.

If a fish kill is pollution caused, the Board's Enforcement Bureau may aid in determining the responsible party and in collecting damages. Any party responsible for a fish kill or oil spill is required by law to pay the costs for the fish lost, the investigation, and any cleanup required.

The HATS program began in 1970, but last year it was expanded considerably when the Water Control Board opened six regional offices in key locations throughout the State. Each regional office now has its own HATS crew to investigate local pollution complaints. This setup allows each regional office to become more familiar with its own territory and also cuts down on valuable travel time. Last year the HATS team combined investigated a total of 582 emergency pollution complaints in the State, including 132 fish kills. Although fish kills may result from natural causes, such as sudden temperature changes, environmental stress or disease, it is the responsibility of the Water Control Board to investigate all such kills and to determine the cause.

Because fishermen especially want live fish and high quality fishing waters, they are the ones in the best position to spot and report such emergency situations.

If you notice dead fish or fish in distress, the following observations will make your report more valuable:

1. Fish reaction—gasping at surface or trying to get out of the water?
2. Approximate count.
3. Species involved—one species or a variety?
4. Date and time of first observation.
5. Unusual water conditions—color, odor, etc.
6. Weather conditions—prior to and during kill.

Remember, if you spot a fish kill, get results by calling (804) 770-2241 and asking for the HATS Team Chief. During nights, holidays or weekends, your call will be intercepted by the Capitol operator who will give you the home phone number of the on-duty HATS chief. During office hours you may contact the State Water Control Board regional office in your area.

Southwest
Abingdon—(703) 628-5183
Valley
Bridgewater—(703) 828-2595
West Central
Roanoke—(703) 563-0354
Northern
Springfield—(703) 354-6620
Piedmont
Richmond—(804) 770-5401
Tidewater
Virginia Beach—(804) 499-8742

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

CONSERVATIONGRAM

Commission Activities and Late Wildlife News . . . At A Glance

BASS SYMPOSIUM ANNOUNCED. Tulsa, Oklahoma, will be the scene for the First National Bass Symposium next February 3 through 6. The overall purpose of the symposium is to develop a state-of-the-art assessment of current knowledge about the biology and management of America's most popular game fishes, the so-called "black bass." The meeting will consider current bass management problems and probable future management trends as well as attempting to suggest promising lines for future research. Both the scientific and sport fishing communities will participate in the conference. Information is available from the Sport Fishing Institute, 608 13th St., N.W. (Suite 801), Washington, D.C. 20005.

SWAN STUDY UNDERWAY. Involving some birds familiar to the Virginia scene and requiring extensive international cooperation, a study of the northern swan and its wetland environment is now underway. Recognizing that the flight of the swan knows no political boundaries, five circumpolar nations--including the United States, the U.S.S.R., Canada, Denmark, Japan and Great Britain--have begun their cooperative effort, according to a report from the World Wildlife Fund, which has recently contributed $5,000 to the project. The three year project will examine the birds' breeding and wintering grounds, their migration behavior, and feeding patterns and will focus on the birds' ability to adapt to recent changes in their wetland habitats. A uniform international system has been set for marking and identifying five species of swan to trace their global movements.

WATERFOWL MEETING PLANNED FOR FEBRUARY. Scheduled for February 4-6 in St. Louis, Missouri, the international symposium is sponsored by Ducks Unlimited and is planned to be an annual session which will involve conservationists from both the professional and private sector. In announcing the symposium, Dale E. Whitesell, executive vice president of Ducks Unlimited, said, "To the best of our knowledge, a conference this comprehensive dealing exclusively with waterfowl, has never been attempted on an annual basis. We will be dealing with habitat and production, special problems such as crop depredation, D.V.E. and other diseases, lead shot poisoning and chemical pollution. We will also devote a session to populations, regulations and harvest."

NEW ATTITUDE NEEDED. A top Federal conservationist recently called for an end to "unreal extremes" in attitudes toward the environment and predicted that major international issues of the future will deal with natural resources. Lynn A. Greenwalt, director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, made the statements at the 33rd Annual Conference of the American Association For Conservation Information in Annapolis. Mr. Greenwalt said an "enlightened stewardship" of the environment was necessary to preserve a healthy and productive world tomorrow. The complex questions dealing with conservation must be answered now. "The best way to answer them is to have an informed public," he said. Mr. Greenwalt went on to say that there can be development with "scientific concern" for the natural resources of the nation and the world. Simply to say "stop" to a proposal "really doesn't do anything. That extreme," he said, "is just as unreal as the other which says go on with development regardless of the consequences." Mr. Greenwalt stated that the role of the fish and wildlife agencies no longer is just one of telling the public where to catch fish or find deer. Rather, the agencies must play an appropriate role "in things related to fish and wildlife and their environments."

Tying The

Muskra

By PAU

A

The initial step in constructing the body of the nymph: attach the gray yarn to the hook and bind with the tying thread.

WHEN you are fishing Virginia's fine trout streams during the early part of the season, you will often find the water running high, cold and gray. There is no hint of any fish activity, and it is difficult to know where the best pools are unless you have fished the stream before later in the season. Where are the trout at times like these? They are usually lying right on the bottom! Because their metabolism is still very slow because of the cold, they find some protection from the current and lie there waiting for some food to come to them.

Spin fishing is not too productive at these times because spinners are usually excitants rather than imitations of food. Because the metabolism of the trout is slow they are not particularly anxious to go wildly chasing a flashing baitfish. Often live bait is not too productive either. This includes both cheese and corn as baits. The resting trout often will only eat that food that will come washing into his protected hole. Of course you can, with practice, bounce live bait along the bottom of the stream. But often bait fishermen will weight their baits with a sinker and let it sit. As the bait is sitting in one place, and the fish is resting in another the results are many times not too productive.

Why then use a nymph? Well, the experts tell us that trout eat 90% of their food underwater. The other 10% is dry flies and terrestrials that happen to fall on the water. During the times of cold and high water the trout will be found in protected places on the bottom of the streams. Because nymphs are most easily maneuvered of all of the underwater baits, they make an ideal bait when fishing requires that the bait be bounced along the bottom. Using a nymph you can cover all of the water in a stretch of the stream very quickly, and then move on to fish adjacent areas. In covering more area you expose your bait to more trout, thereby increasing your chances of hooking a fish. One additional advantage is that you can legally fish the state's reserved fly-fishing water using nymphs made as shown in this article. These fishing areas hold the largest trout, and your chances of success are usually much better here as the fly-fishing areas have much less fishing pressure than the non-restricted streams and lakes. Last year my sons, aged 9 and 10, and I caught over 100 trout, fishing just on weekends. In the early season the Muskrat Nymph was the most productive of our flies.

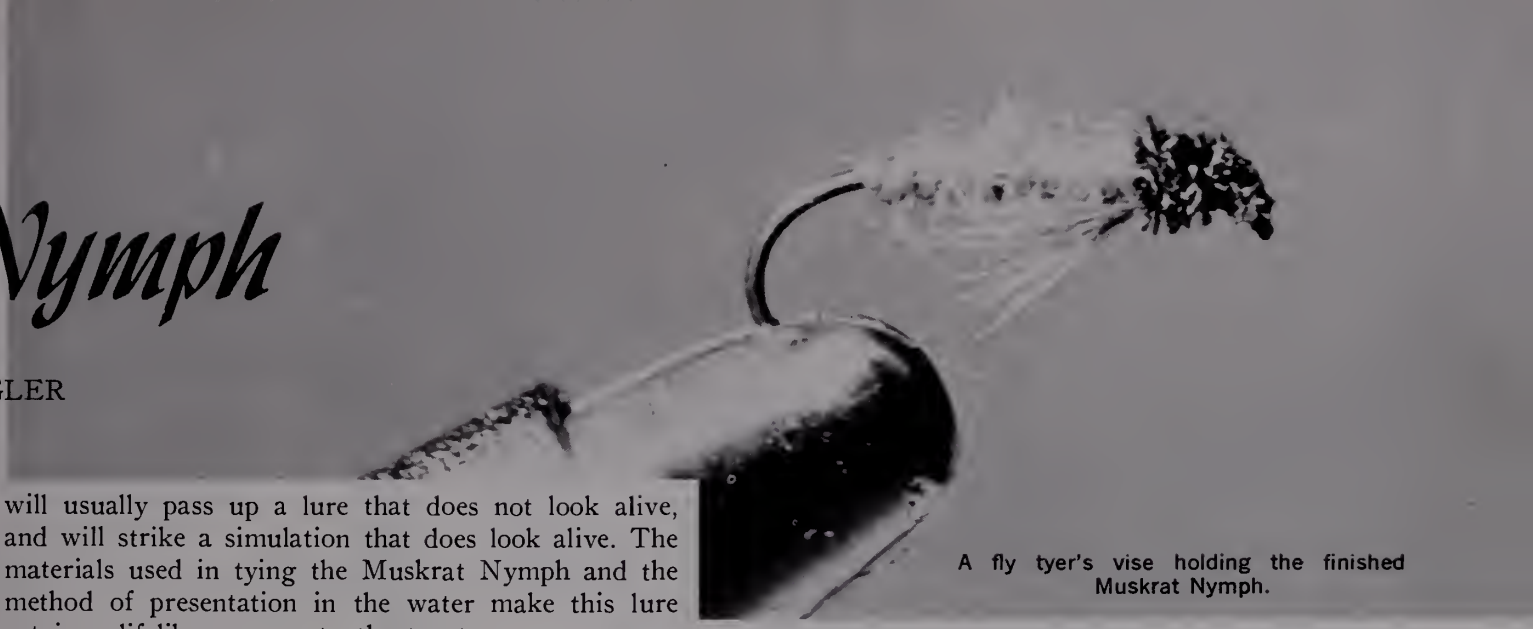
The Muskrat Nymph described in this article is the easiest of all nymphs to tie. It is also a very productive simulation of two widely distributed species of nymph and larva life—the Black Midge Larva and the Grey Crane Fly Nymph. Both of these species have light grey bodies and black heads. Note that I say simulations of these forms of aquatic life. An exact imitation of the nymph has been on the market for several years. Unfortunately these imitations have caught more fishermen than they have fish. The secret to catching fish using simulations is that the simulation must look alive to the fish. The truth is that the fish

The yarn is slightly twisted and then wrapped around the hook to the bend of the hook. Wrap fairly snug to keep the body tight.

Now wrap the yarn somewhat more loosely back to the starting point. Tie off the yarn.

Nymph

KUGLER
dale



A fly tyer's vise holding the finished Muskrat Nymph.

will usually pass up a lure that does not look alive, and will strike a simulation that does look alive. The materials used in tying the Muskrat Nymph and the method of presentation in the water make this lure act in a lifelike manner to the trout.

To tie this nymph follow the sequence of photographs illustrating this article. Use a hook of any size between 8 and 14. For Virginia streams I prefer a size 10. The length of the hook should be 2X or 3X long, and the weight should be 2X for deep or fast water. Regular weight hooks make this lure quite effective for shallow fishing later in the season. I use a flat bonded nylon thread made by the Belding Corticelli Co. in size A. This thread is usually available wherever sewing supplies are sold. If your wife sews, simply buy *her* an assortment of the 24 colors that they make, and you will always have a supply of good tying thread on hand. Any light gray acrylic knitting yarn is excellent for this fly. Search through yarn shops or the knitting department of your department store for the smallest package that you can find. Usually a lifetime supply costs less than one dollar. The lighter the shade of gray, the better. Wetting the fly tends to darken the body material. Once the body of the fly is tied you must scrape the nymph to make it fuzzy. Do not hesitate to do this as the fuzzyness of the nymph is what provides the lifelike appearance in the water. In all, remember that nothing is critical in the making of the Muskrat Nymph because it is a simulation rather than an exact duplication of a specific nymph. This makes it perfect as the first fly for a beginning fly tyer.

Most of the information that you have read in the past about the fishing of nymphs has no real relevance to the technique that I am about to describe. My way is not guaranteed to catch 90 percent of the trout in the stream, but my 9- and 10-year-old sons use it and have considerable success in catching trout. In the old way you cast directly upstream and let the nymph float downstream at dead drift. Unfortunately, this may be the most effective technique, but I never knew when I had a strike so I never caught many trout this way. One day I happened to purchase and read Leonard Wright's *Fishing the Dry Fly as a Living Insect*. If his technique for fishing dry flies was valid, then I reasoned that it should be just as valid for wet flies and nymphs. I have found this to be true. As an added bonus the application of Wright's discoveries and techniques to nymph fishing makes even the novice fisherman an effective fish taker.

Use this technique the next time that you are out on the stream. Face towards the stream and directly towards the opposite bank. Now turn upstream at about a 45-degree angle and cast straight ahead. Follow your line as it sinks. If at any time you see your line pause, then you should strike. By the time that your lure has floated directly across from you, it should be bouncing along the bottom. At this time I twitch my rod tip about every five seconds attempting to make the nymph move a few inches in the water every few feet. Keep this motion up until you see that the nymph has completed its path and has come to the surface. At this point I have two different methods that I follow. If the water is fast, I simply pick up the line and cast again upstream. If the water is slow, I then work the nymph back to me in a series of short jerks.

Try the Muskrat Nymph when fishing this year. You will find that it is very easy to tie, and also easy to fish if you follow my technique. Good fishing this year, and I will see you on the stream.

Tie in three short lengths of peacock herl (fibers from tail feather) on top of the hook. These should be side by side if possible. Trim to ¼ inch in length and finish head with a couple of half hitches.

Tie in small amount of hackle under the fly to simulate legs. This hackle should be a medium brown.

TRY A PACK-IN VACATION

By JIM AUGUSTINE
Springfield

RENT A FAMILY CABIN ON THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL

IT was early evening when we finished supper at the remote log cabin we had rented high in Virginia's Shenandoah National Park. The cool green forest around us had begun to grow quiet. As we sat on the front porch, we breathed in the clean, fresh mountain air and watched the sun melt behind the oak and hickory trees. Through an opening in the forest cover, the lights in Page Valley several thousand feet below began to wink on one by one. Night was falling on the plants, trees, and animals of this hardwood forest community of the eastern mountains.

Earlier, spurred on by the gathering dusk, my wife had cooked our supper quickly on the two-burner propane gas stove we had packed into the cabin. She had prepared instant beef Stroganoff with water we had brought her from rock springs bubbling from the ground 50 yards to the north. Now as we relaxed, two kerosene lanterns inside the cabin produced strange flickering shadows on the rude chestnut walls. My wife, two children, and I were savoring the early hours of our first primitive camping experience: in a rental cabin perched high on the western slope of the Blue Ridge, near Hawksbill Mountain, almost a mile by Appalachian Trail from the Skyline Drive, amid 190 square miles of natural forest.

When night finally fell, we talked our protesting children inside to their sleeping bags which lay on top of mattresses on sturdy wooden bunks. My boy, nine, and girl, seven, chattered excitedly as they glanced nervously about trying to find the cabin's four corners lost in total darkness. The pitch black of the mountain night reminded me of my own childhood when I had been frightened out of my wits by the movie "Drums Along the Mohawk."

So began our two-day stay in a primitive cabin maintained by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club of Washington, D.C. Open to nonmembers, this conservation organization's rental program is believed to be the only one of its kind in the U.S. Thirteen isolated cabins, made of log and stone, nestle among the mountain laurel and rhododendron near the club's 210-mile section of the Appalachian Trail for hikers, which stretches from Maine to Florida. Locales for these uncommon and wonderful retreats range from the slopes of the South Mountain in the Michaux-Mont Alto State Forest northwest of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, to deep within the George Washington National Forest near Staunton, Virginia.

Last year, over 4,800 people, 78 percent of them nonmembers paying $1.25 a night, stayed in these interesting wild country quarters. The campers packed in their supplies over rough trails for distances ranging from 100 yards to over three miles.

Allan B. Tanner, 43-year-old bearded Washington geophysicist, the club's reservations chairman, said, "As far as we know, this is the only arrangement of its type in the United States. We permit people we know scantily, if at all, to have the exclusive use of a cabin a long distance from anybody who could keep an eye on them. It's kind of risky. Most of the time, however, our trust is well justified."

Rock Springs, our 17-foot square cabin, was constructed out of seasoned chestnut logs by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1936. It faces westward over a deep forested gorge on the side of Hawksbill Mountain in the central portion of Shenandoah National Park, 2½ miles from Big Meadows Campground and approximately 100 miles from Washington. It is one of five locked cabins scattered across the park's 186,500 acres.

From the parking area along the Skyline Drive, we packed in over 60 lbs. of food, camping gear, and clothing almost a mile along a moderately steep section of the Appalachian Trail to Rock Springs. Since

we are not your sturdy Sierra Clubbers, what seemed to us like a moderately steep ascent, might have been to the more experienced only a brisk walk.

When we arrived, I managed to open the sturdy shutters that masked the cabin's four windows. Next, after puzzling east from south, and top from bottom, I placed three of the four screens over as many windows. The fourth window, at ground level, remained closed because of animals.

Inside each cabin is a Club logbook that asks occupants to record "dates, names, weather data, the condition of the cabin, hikes taken, and anything else of interest." As I relaxed after securing the screens, my eye caught several references to "Choppin' Charlie —the Mad Mouse of the Mountain" who apparently was in residence. There were other allusions to whippoorwills, rabbits, chipmunks, deer, Carolina chickadees, and yes, even bear.

Much to everyone's relief, the animals we saw were not nearly that large. Their size had more in common with the visitor who wrote of a raccoon crawling up on the front porch "only inches from the group." There were numerous chipmunks and groundhogs; several wild rabbits that allowed us very close; the skunk; many songbirds and woodpeckers; butterflies; millipedes and assorted insects; and, finally, a hawk.

The joys of seeing wild animals close up, drinking water from a bubbling spring, breathing fresh mountain air, and walking through clusters of blooming mountain laurel nestled amid deep shades of forest green, more than compensated for the minor inconveniences of the remote cabin. As we hiked to Hawksbill, one of the first peaks over 4,000 feet south of the Catskills, we suddenly felt ourselves completely one with the natural world around us. We saw ourselves not as an independent species, but as part of the unbelievable variety of animal and plant life in a forest rapidly reverting to its wilderness state.

Our enthusiasm for the back-country cabins reached such a peak that we started to plan our next trip to one of the club's most popular, and more remote sites. Corbin Cabin, an old two-story mountaineer's home, mirrors the mountain people's hard-pressed life before the Virginia legislature authorized blanket land condemnation for Shenandoah National Park in the 1930's. The Park Service allows the Trail Club, which for $8,000 restored the badly decaying structure 16 years after Mr. Corbin was evicted, to manage the five government-owned cabins in the park. Questions have been raised about the Trail Club's right to allow its 2,100 members the privilege, twice a year, of reserving property within a national park one week earlier than nonmembers. Because of this policy, most cabins are booked on Friday and Saturday nights by members.

The nonprofit organization defends itself by pointing out that it operates a system of 13 back-country cabins that may be rented year-round. This means that its volunteers have to maintain an accurate reservation schedule, keep records of receipts, furnish statistics to the National Park Service, answer hundreds of questions about camping and hiking, and take care of emergencies and expensive repairs. The National Park Service admits that if the Trail Club didn't operate the cabins at no cost to the taxpayer, they would have to be closed immediately.

If you go to those remote log cabins, ten of which are located along the Appalachian Trail from northwest of Gettysburg, Penn., to Rockfish Gap, Va., and the other three in the George Washington National Forest, the first step is to write or phone the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 1718 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (Area Code 202 638-5306—7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. week nights). They will send you a reservation application and an information sheet noting approximate locations and capacities. Nonmembers can reserve a cabin three weeks in advance, year-round. The cost is $1.25 per person a night. To get a reservation and secure a key, however, you must be 21 and accompany your party each night.

The cabins, which hold from 4 to 15 campers, are equipped with bunks, mattresses, blankets (no sheets), tables, benches, and cooking and table utensils. Lighting is by kerosene lantern. Water is from a spring or stream. The toilet is a privy. Cooking is on a wood stove or in an outdoor fireplace. However the wood supply around the cabins, particularly in Shenandoah National Park which bans the cutting of dead standing trees, is often uncertain. To spare yourself time, it might be advisable to bring in a portable propane gas cook stove. Foods suitable for lightweight camping abound and include dehydrated soups; Chicken Supreme and Ham Chedderton dinners; au gratin, creamed, scalloped or hash brown potatoes; dried fruits; toaster tarts; and powdered juices and milk.

By easy stages a pair of young hikers from Rock Springs Cabin ascend a lovely forest trail to the highest peak in Shenandoah National Park, 4049-foot Hawksbill Mountain. Wildlife is often seen along these back trails.

LAKE ANNA

Virginia's Newest Hotspot

By GERALD ALMY
Arlington

A LIGHT mist hovered over the water's surface as I slowly and painstakingly worked the lively creek minnow over the rocky bottom of the large impoundment. I twitched the small fish enticingly through the glassy, emerald green waters.

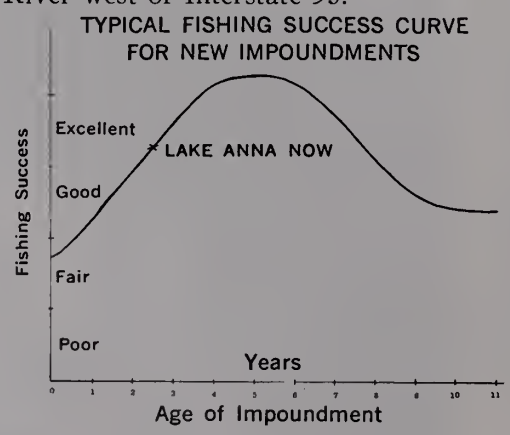
Then it happened. The line grew taut and the sensitive tip of my ultralight rod jumped to the tapping of a hungry largemouth bass. Shoving my rod in the direction of the pickup so as not to spook the fish, I flipped open the bail of the spinning reel and let him take line out.

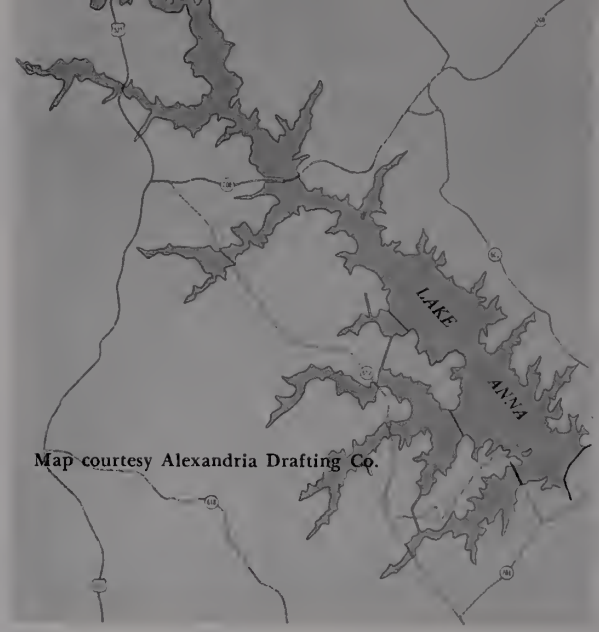
After the fish ran for a few seconds I took up the slack and set the hook with a solid sweeping motion. Using such a light action rod I had to strike hard to imbed the small hook in the tough tissue of the bass' inner mouth. But my energy was not wasted. I was fast onto this bass which would easily top the 4 pound mark at which my line tested out.

He put up a dogged and frenzied fight full of runs, plodding side tracks, bulling and churning, and even a salmon style leap clear of the lake's surface. A thrill indeed on ultralight tackle.

The scene was Lake Anna—the hottest impoundment in Virginia these days for fishing. It's hard to believe, but the gates were shut, completing the formation of Lake Anna just over 2 years ago, in January of 1972. Yet already this reservoir is producing largemouth bass up to 11 pounds, citation-sized pickerel (4 pounds), crappies by the barrelful, scrappy smallmouths, and even a few striped bass. That's mighty fine fishing for a lake barely 2 years old, and it leaves the anglers around here chattering in expectation of the future fishing prospects on this young lake.

The Virginia Electric & Power Company (VEPCO) created Lake Anna, to provide a cooling source for their projected nuclear power plant by damming the North Anna River west of Interstate 95.





Map courtesy Alexandria Drafting Co.

The lake is big—it covers 13,000 acres including the cooling ponds which will be closed to fishing when power generation begins. Astute bass anglers know that new man-made impoundments like this one have a pattern of fishing success that is consistently reproduced (see graph). They usually start out moderately well, improve rapidly, usually for a period of 4-6 years, and then level off after declining to a more average level. Many fish are still caught in these "old" lakes, of course, but not nearly in the quantitative abundance of those 2-6 years old—the lakes on the rise; the lakes of the future.

So, for the next 3-4 years Lake Anna should do nothing but improve, which is a bit hard to believe if you've sampled the tremendous fishing it already offers, and not just for largemouth bass. Smallmouths that spread out when their river habitat was flooded are thriving in their new environment. The lake is a crappie mecca. Pickerel are everywhere, and bluegills are readily available to the worm fisher or fly caster. In addition, the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries has planted 54,000 striped bass in the lake. These fish should provide some fantastic fishing in a year or two.

One day last August we were having a lip-cracking heat spell. It was in the 90's every day for about 2 weeks. No time to fish, you say. Well, some of us just get sick—edgy, bored, depressed—if we don't get out once every week or two to pursue our piscatorial interests. I'm one of these fishing addicts; so I dredged up another to accompany me on an outing to Lake Anna in the midst of this scorcher. Local newspaper reports had smothered any optimism we may have had.

We decided live bait was needed in such a situation, so we seined a few minnows in a nearby creek. They proved to be the answer. Trying a bridge abutment for crappie near Va. Rt. 522 where we launched the boat we immediately hit pay dirt. Not big, as crappies go, about ¾ of a pound apiece, but what numbers! Literally every time we threw the baited #4 gold hooks in the water we had a scrappy speckled perch

tugging on our lines. It was almost too easy. And this was true for the whole length of the bridge—some 100 yards! Many were returned to grow a bit, but some were kept this trip for the frying pan. Crappies are too delicious to throw them all back, as I usually do with most of the game fish I catch.

Amazingly, however, with this abundance of crappies we had little success fishing around submerged brush piles. The bridges were the ticket on this hot day—probably because of the shade and deep cool water they offered the fish.

After about two hours of this super fast action, though, we thought we'd try for some bigger game—largemouths and pickerel. We had already taken a few while drifting for crappies with small minnows and cane poles, although not any big ones. Trolling is a good way to explore a large lake like this if you do not have any of the electronic gadgets so popular today. We tried this with deep diving plugs and picked up a couple of respectable-sized bigmouths—2-3 pounds apiece. What fish though! They were barely 16 inches long, yet weighed this much. But they were not pot bellied, just extremely broad and deep girthed—definitely the healthiest looking bass I've ever seen. We returned these beauties for others to do battle with.

Going back to the bridge where we had caught the crappie we decided to try some of the large minnows we had left. This resulted in some fast and furious fishing for quite a mixed bag—largemouths, smallmouths, pickerel, and even a few more crappie.

You may be thinking this was an unusually lucky fishing trip. Not so. No, it is more *typical* of the fishing available on this hot young lake. And as far as one could predict from the pattern of fishing success that has been common on other large man-made impoundments in the South, it should get even better for several more years.

This is not to say that every day out on the lake will be that productive. No one could guarantee that, and if they could it would ruin fishing. Every lake has its off days when the fish "just aren't biting." But they are few and far between on Lake Anna.

To fish Anna I would recommend a medium-weight spinning or baitcasting outfit for plastic-worm fishing.

Two Lake Anna bass photographed then released, in the typical 1 to 2 pound range. Mixed bags of bass, pickerel, and crappie are common, especially on small lures.

Doug Jones battles a scrappy largemouth on ultralight tackle, sufficient for most Lake Anna action except plastic worm fishing. As the fish grow, heavier tackle may be required.

For every other kind of lure and bait fishing, ultralight spinning tackle works fine. But a fly rod is good for early morning and late evening shoreline fishing.

Recommended lures and baits go something like this:

Bass: Big O's, Hellbenders, Plastic Worms (purple, green, and blue), Rebels, Rapalas, Mepps Aglia Spinners, and Jitterbugs for early morning.

Crappie: Small jigs, rubber grubs, small spinners.

Pickerel: Spinnerbaits, Jointed Rebels or Rapalas, Big O's, and blue and black plastic worms.

Bluegills: small spinners, foam rubber bodied poppers, worms.

As a general rule, however, minnows, rigged on gold #4 hooks, are probably the most productive lure or bait for all species of fish in the lake, except perhaps worms for bluegills.

Lake Anna is located west of Interstate 95, south of Fredericksburg, Virginia. Take the Thornburg exit off I-95 about 10 miles south of Fredericksburg. Go west here on 606 to Poast Oak. Make a left here and follow Route 208 directly to the lake.

Several marinas have cropped up quickly on the lake, primarily on Routes 208 and 522. Sturgeon Creek Marina and Lake Anna Marina were two of the first to appear. And the state of Virginia has a park and boat-launching site in the planning stages which is another plus for the future.

Few motels can be found near the lake, but ample facilities are available in Fredericksburg, some 28 miles away. The first campground on Anna opened recently. It is located on Route 522 north of Mineral and is called "Christopher Run Campgrounds."

A guide service is currently being organized by some of the better anglers who live nearby and who seem to have pried into every nook and cranny of the lake since its inception. An invaluable aid for the first-time angler on this lake is the structure fishing map printed by the Alexandria Drafting Company. These maps are available in most Virginia sporting goods stores.

So there it is. By my calculations you have 3-4 more years of superb fishing up for grabs at Lake Anna. If you're in the vicinity, why not stop in and try this sparkling young lake's delights.

GOVERNOR'S CONSERVATION AWARD PROGRAM

Photo by Finnegan & Assoc.
Washington, D.C.

Virginia Wildlife readers are invited to nominate their favorite conservation leaders for this year's Governor's Award. It is an excellent way to recognize those who often give much of their personal time to conservation work far beyond any compensation they might receive. The awards will be presented at a banquet October 19 at the Hotel Chamberlain in Hampton. Tickets are available at $7.50 from VWF Directors or from the Awards Committee, 122 Royster Building, Norfolk, Va. 23510.

Once again the Virginia Wildlife Federation climaxes its outstanding program for the year by recognizing individuals who have contributed greatly to the conservation of our natural resources.

From the nominees to be submitted, I am confident its awards committee will select those whose efforts have been most impressive and reward them for their contribution.

I extend my congratulations to the Federation for this program, and I urge Virginians everywhere to make their own contribution by submitting names of deserving candidates for this high honor.

Mills E. Godwin, Jr., Governor

CATEGORIES

CONSERVATION EDUCATOR

CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

SOIL CONSERVATIONIST

WATER CONSERVATIONIST

LEGISLATIVE CONSERVATIONIST

FOREST CONSERVATIONIST

WILDLIFE CONSERVATIONIST

YOUTH CONSERVATIONIST

CONSERVATION COMMUNICATOR

CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

Sponsored by
The Virginia Wildlife Federation
and
Sears Roebuck and Co.

Virginia Wildlife Federation

INCORPORATED

THE GOVERNOR'S CONSERVATION AWARDS PROGRAM FOR 1974

NOMINATION FORM

To make a nomination, send two (2) copies of this form and all attachments to: Conservation Awards Center, 122 Royster Bldg., Norfolk, Va. 23510

NAME OF NOMINEE: _____

COMPLETE ADDRESS _____

_____

AWARD CATEGORY: _____

Please specify one of the ten categories for which nomination is made. Use a separate nomination form for each award category and for each individual or group nominated.

RECOMMENDED BY: _____
Name **Title**

COMPLETE ADDRESS: _____

NAME OF MEMBER CLUB: _____

DATE: _____

Please attach two (2) copies of a resume of achievements not to exceed two typed pages. Include organization memberships, affiliations, past achievements, past recognition, specific acts for which recommendation is based, and other references for comparison. A full documentation is needed by the judging committee.

NOTE: NOMINATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN MIDNIGHT, AUGUST 15, 1974.

A Study of RABIES in Southwestern Virginia

By ELLEN T. PRIOR, ROBERT H. GILES, JR.
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

WILDLIFE are becoming increasingly important as vectors or carriers of the dread disease, rabies. They now comprise the highest proportion of all confirmed cases in the United States. Bats are next after gray fox in importance.

Reports indicate that both the gray and red foxes are primary rabies vectors in Virginia. The striped skunk, raccoon, and bats (of several genera) are believed to be vectors in other areas. Reported rabies incidence, however, does not seem to be a reliable index to the actual occurrence of rabies in wildlife and tends to vary with species and with area. "Latent" or chronic states of rabies infection are also thought to exist in nature.

Table 1. Species Collected From Washington, Smyth & Montgomery Counties and Examined for Rabies by the Investigators

Small rodents	Bats	Carnivores
Mice	*Eptesicus*	Skunk
Rat	*Pipistrellus*	Cat (house)
Vole	*Myotis*	Raccoon
Chipmunk	**Lasiurus*	
Insectivores	Foxes	Miscellaneous
Shrew	Gray	Woodchuck
Mole	Red	Rabbit
		Opossum
	Total 214 animals	

* Only specimen diagnosed positive for rabies. It was a Red Bat and was submitted by persons interested in the survey.

This investigation, a graduate study by the senior author in 1969, was made to locate possible rabies reservoirs or latent-carrier species and thus provide an improved picture of rabies incidence in western Virginia. Objectives also included analysis of some variables of the reporting system, evaluation of the significance of known rabies vectors in western Virginia, comparison of incidence in wild vs. domestic species, and observations on seasonal variation in incidence.

A survey of small mammals was conducted in an attempt to locate possible rabies reservoirs or latent-carrier species. Field collections were made in July and August 1968 in Washington and Smyth counties. The area has a long history of high rabies incidence. Most of the mammals were trapped; some were carcasses picked up along highways. Bats were collected chiefly by hand or net from caves and attics. Brain and other tissues were examined using a special microscope for observing "fluorescent antibodies." Questionable and positive slides were confirmed in lab tests with inoculated weanling mice.

Ms. Prior is presently with the Division of Wildlife Refuges, Department of the Interior. The authors thank the Virginia State Department of Health for providing research funds, facilities, and the assistance of their personnel in this study.

All in all, two-hundred-fourteen mammals were examined for rabies (Table 1). Only one specimen was diagnosed positive. Either the mammals collected did not carry rabies (with the exception of the bat) or the virus was in a form that could not be detected by the fluorescent antibody technique for brain exam. The existence of a latent or carrier condition among foxes and other species deserves further investigation.

Rabies records from the Virginia Southwest District Health Laboratory and the Wytheville Agricultural Laboratory, 1963-68, were tabulated and analyzed for 18 western Virginia counties.

The number of suspected animals submitted to the State Health Department personnel from a county is more closely correlated with the distance of the county from the laboratory than with the human population density of the county.

Cattle, in contrast to other domestic species (e.g. cats and dogs), tended to be submitted no matter how far a county was from the examining laboratory, probably due to the relatively higher economic value of this species. Wildlife comprised 64 percent of the cases diagnosed positive for rabies (Table 2), yet fewer wild species were submitted for examination than domestic species.

The high percentage of gray foxes diagnosed positive (92% of all foxes and 57% of the total positive cases) indicates that the gray fox is the primary rabies vector in western Virginia.

Peak rabies incidence has been observed during late winter and early spring in other areas as well as in western Virginia and coincides with the period of the year when foxes and certain other wild vectors would be experiencing increased movement and interaction in their breeding and food-gathering activities.

Table 2. Animals Submitted for Rabies Examination to the Virginia Southwest District Health Laboratory, 1963–1968*

County	Number Submitted	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Scott	264	91	34.47
Bland	12	4	33.33
Lee	293	95	32.42
Washington	497	161	32.39
Floyd	87	24	27.59
Smyth	182	48	26.37
Russell	116	30	25.86
Tazewell	166	42	25.30
Patrick	46	10	23.74
Carroll	74	17	22.97
Pulaski	103	18	17.48
Grayson	13	2	15.38
Wise	140	21	15.00
Dickenson	85	10	11.76
Wythe	73	7	9.59
Giles	36	3	8.33
Montgomery	108	6	5.56
Buchanan	61	2	3.28
Total	2356	591	25.08

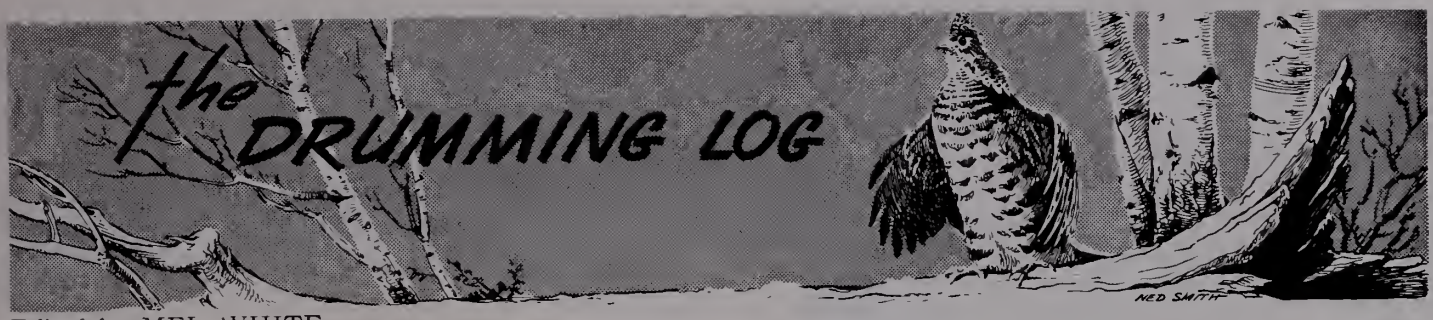
* Does not include birds or mammals which were unfit for examination.

CATCH A RECORD FISH

MOST serious anglers have entertained the thought of hooking and landing a record fish and the fame and publicity it would bring, then quickly banished it from their mind as an idle daydream. Although statistically the chances are slim, a great many records are caught by casual anglers who just happen to dunk a bait or cast a line in the right place. Many aren't even aware that their catch is a record. For citation purposes, have your catch officially weighed and registered. Freshwater fish can be weighed at most sporting goods stores or any grocery or meat market with a state inspected scale. Saltwater fishes must be weighed by a weighmaster at an official weighing station. Inquiry at a local sporting goods store or marina will usually turn up the name of the nearest one or a list may be obtained from the Virginia Salt Water Sport Fishing Association, 25th Street and Pacific Avenue, Virginia Beach, VA 23451. Saltwater catches may only be entered in the tournament from May 1 through November 30, although new records may be registered at any time. Freshwater entries are accepted the year around if submitted to the Game Commission within 60 days of date caught, certificates usually sent within 30 days after application is received. Saltwater citation plaques are awarded annually after the tournament closes November 30.

Species	State Record	Where caught	When caught	Angler	Citation Minimum	World Record
FRESHWATER						
Brook Trout	4 lb. 2 oz.	Back Creek	11-13-1973	O. G. Burkholder	2 lb.	14 lb. 8 oz.
Brown Trout	11 lb. 9 oz.	Marshall Draft	10-31-1971	N. Creasy	2 lb.	39 lb. 8 oz.
Rainbow Trout	9 lb. 14 oz.	Pond-Monterey	5-5 -1967	D. L. Talbott	5 lb.	37 lb.
Carp	60 lb.	Private Lake	7-5 -1970	Ben Topham	20 lb.	83 lb. 8 oz.
Channel Cat	30 lb.	Smith Mt. Reservoir	6-2 -1973	Robt. Underwood	10 lb.	58 lb.
Crappie	4 lb. 14 oz.	Lake Conner	4-8 -1967	E. L. Blackstock	2 lb. 8 oz.	5 lb. 3 oz.
Flathead Cat	57 lb.	South Holston	7-29-1972	A. Robinette	20 lb.	104 lb.
Gar	20 lb. 8 oz.	Northwest River	8-20-1973	R. H. Marshall	10 lb.	50 lb. 5 oz.
Grindle (Bowfin)	17 lb. 8 oz.	Chickahominy Lake	11-14-1964	E. C. Cutright	10 lb.	16 lb. 8 oz.
Kentucky Bass	5 lb. 12 oz.	Claytor Lake	5-25-1973	S. G. Turner	3 lb.	8 lb. 8 oz.
Lake Trout	5 lb. 6 oz.	Philpott Dam	7-6 -1966	A. A. Conner	5 lb.	63 lb. 2 oz.
Largemouth Bass	14 lb.	Gaston Lake	4-17-1972	P. H. Creggar	8 lb.	22 lb. 4 oz.
Muskellunge	31 lb.	Smith Mt. Lake	5-25-1973	Pete Fuqua	6 lb.	69 lb. 15 oz.
Northern Pike	18 lb. 5 oz.	Occoquan	5-3 -1974	O. J. Richardson	6 lb.	46 lb. 2 oz.
Chain Pickerel	8 lb. 4 oz.	Gaston Lake	10-7 -1973	H. R. Evans	4 lb.	9 lb. 6 oz.
Rock Bass	2 lb. 2 oz.	Pigg River	3-29-1964	J. Monaghan	1 lb.	3 lb. 10 oz.
Smallmouth Bass	8 lb.	Claytor Lake	5-22-1964	C. A. Garay	4 lb.	11 lb. 15 oz.
Striped Bass (Landlocked)	34 lb.	Buggs Island	5-22-1973	B. L. Crutchfield	10 lb.	55 lb.
Sunfish (Redear)	4 lb. 8 oz.	Private Pond	6-19-1970	Gene Ball	1 lb.	4 lb. 8 oz.
Sunfish (Bluegill)	4 lb. 8 oz.	Private Pond	2-7 -1970	T. E. Jones	1 lb.	4 lb. 12 oz.
Walleye	22 lb. 1 oz.	New River	8-20-1973	R. G. Barrett	8 lb.	25 lb.
White Bass	4 lb.	Claytor Lake	5-17-1974	E. V. Clark	2 lb.	5 lb. 4 oz.
Yellow Perch	2 lb. 4 oz.	New River	3-25-1972	R. L. Irvin	1 lb.	4 lb. 3½ oz.
White Perch	2 lb. 4 oz.	Lake Smith	11-21-1973	R. Shoemaker	1 lb.	4 lb. 12 oz.
Coho Salmon	8 lb. 12 oz.	Philpott	12-27-1971	M. Chilton	3 lb.	31 lb.
Sauger	5 lb. 8 oz.	S. Holston Lake	7-2 -1972	R. Stallard	3 lb.	8 lb. 5 oz.
SALTWATER						
Blue Marlin	511 lb.	Off Va. Beach	1971	S. T. Alcus III	250 lb.*	845 lb.
Yellowfin Tuna	110 lb. 12 oz.	Off Wachapreague	1959	J. E. Gladstone	50 lb.	308 lb.
Bluefin Tuna	138 lb.	Off Va. Capes	1963	J. C. McMahon	50 lb.	1065 lb.
White Marlin	102 lb. 3 oz.	Off Wachapreague	1967	L. Weisblatt	50 lb.*	161 lb.
Sailfish	63 lb.	Off Va. Beach	1973	F. P. Margiotta		141 lb. 1 oz.
Cobia	102 lb.	Cape Charles	1938	J. E. Stansbury	45 lb.	110 lb. 5 oz.
Black Drum	111 lb.	Off Cape Charles	1973	Betty D. Hall	60 lb.	111 lb.
Channel Bass	83 lb.	Cape Charles	1949	Zack Waters, Jr.	40 lb.	90 lb.
Tarpon	98 lb. 12 oz.	Off Oyster	1967	Joe Dove	40 lb.*	283 lb.
Wahoo	89 lb.	Off Va. Capes	1960	J. B. Pressey, Sr.	20 lb.	149 lb.
Striped Bass	58 lb. 8 oz.	Gwynns Island	1963	Dewey Norton	20 lb.	73 lb.
Dolphin	62 lb.	Off Va. Beach	1971	Sue Smith	15 lb.	85 lb.
King Mackerel	50 lb. 8 oz.	Parkers Island	1963	H. L. Johnston	20 lb.	78 lb. 12 oz.
Amberjack	91 lb.	Off Va. Beach	1971	Mark Conrad	45 lb.	149 lb.
False Albacore	25 lb. 4 oz.	Off Va. Capes	1964	Jack Sparrow	15 lb.	
Bluefish	23 lb. 5 oz.	Off Va. Beach	1971	C. H. Blake, Jr.	17 lb.	31 lb. 12 oz.
Tautog	20 lb. 4 oz.	Off Va. Beach	1971	E. W. Nickerson	6 lb.	21 lb. 6 oz.
Flounder	17 lb. 8 oz.	Baltimore Channel	1971	C. E. Cross	6 lb.	30 lb. 12 oz.
Sheepshead	18 lb. 13 oz.	Bridge Tunnel	1973	W. F. Rowe		55 lb.
Spadefish	12 lb.	Plantation Light	1959	W. A. Luettinger		
Gray Trout	14 lb. 2 oz.	Ches. Bay Bridge Tun.	1973	D. W. Mayo	9 lb.	19 lb. 8 oz.
Speckled Trout	10 lb. 15 oz.	Ches. Bay Bridge Tun.	1973	Jefferson Brown	4 lb.	15 lb. 6 oz.
Codfish	35 lb.	Off Wachapreague	1969	R. Crammer		98 lb. 12 oz.
Sea Bass	7 lb. 1 oz.	Off Va. Capes	1969	Vernice Byford	4 lb.	8 lb.
Croaker	5 lb. 1 oz.	Off Onancock	1963	F. D. Mears		
Porgy	5 lb. 2 oz.	Off Chincoteague	1970	Dolly Shepherd		
Spot	2 lb. 2 oz.	Hampton Bar	1948	E. E. Longworth	15 ounces	

*Citation for release at any size.



Edited by MEL WHITE

Phelps Honors Conservation Roundup Founder

Virginia Game Commission Executive Director Chester F. Phelps, as head of the awards committee, presented the Fontana Conservation Roundup's first Special Award to the founder of the conservation conference, Lucile K. Boyden, now of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Generally recognized as the originator of the unique Fontana Conservation Roundup, she was the unanimous choice of the awards committee to receive the first of a series of annual awards which will recognize persons who have done the most to make the Roundup the institution it has become. A small shield goes to the recipient, whose name is also engraved on the larger plaque which will be on permanent display at Fontana Village.

Fontana News Bureau Photo

Mr. Chester Phelps, Virginia Game Commission Executive Director, is shown presenting the first Fontana Conservation Roundup Special Award to Lucile K. Boyden, founder of the Conservation Roundup.

The Fontana Conservation Roundup was conceived in 1960 as a forum where representatives of federal government, state government, private enterprise and citizens groups could exchange views on important conservation issues of the day. The annual conference is sponsored by Fontana Village Resort, Fontana Dam, North Carolina, and has at one time or another featured nearly all of the leading conservationists of our day on its program. The theme of the 1974 conference recently concluded was "Environmental Tradeoffs." It featured two Virginians, John C. White of Virginia Electric and Power Company, Richmond, who presented a paper on nuclear energy production, and Dr. Keith Argow, associate professor of forestry, VPI & SU, Blacksburg, whose paper discussed education programs.

In his presentation speech, Phelps said, "Fontana Village is unique among the resort industry in being concerned about the preservation of those natural resources upon which it—and every resort—is so dependent. This concern was expressed 15 years ago when the first Conservation Roundup was held under the sponsorship of the Fontana management. Without the imagination, initiative, courage and long weeks of hard work and travel of Lucile Boyden, then promotions director for the resort, the Roundup would never have been born."

Commission Photo by F. N. Satterlee

Max Carpenter, center, Game Commission biologist with 21½ pound gobbler taken on the Wunder Wildlife Management Area early on the opening day of this year's spring gobbler season. Carpenter's gobbler had a 9½ inch beard. On the left is Gordon Souder of Broadway, Virginia, and on the right is Nancy Satterlee of Vienna, Virginia.

Edited by ANN PILCHER

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS CLUB ACTIVITIES

Outstanding projects of Suffolk's Holland Windmill 4-H Club concern litter prevention. This past year its 15 members placed special emphasis on our senior citizens. Individual members thought of ways they could be of help and volunteered their services. At each meeting they reported such tasks as caring for lawns, painting, cleaning, trash removal, etc.

Junk craft workshops were held. The club held a doorways contest at Christmas. Many members made their decorations from "throw away" items and several reported making decorations for senior citizens.

Educational programs were conducted through three area schools. The club provided films and other Keep Virginia Beautiful materials for these schools and other groups. Club members presented programs and set up "Keep Virginia Beautiful" displays. A very successful project has been that of taking orders for spring blooming bulbs to provide funds for citizenship activities. Club members collected cancelled stamps, old hosiery, egg cartons, Christmas cards, etc., for use in "therapy" at Patrick Henry Hospital. They also collected and participated in the Nansemond 4-H Honor Club's glass, paper and aluminum recycling projects.

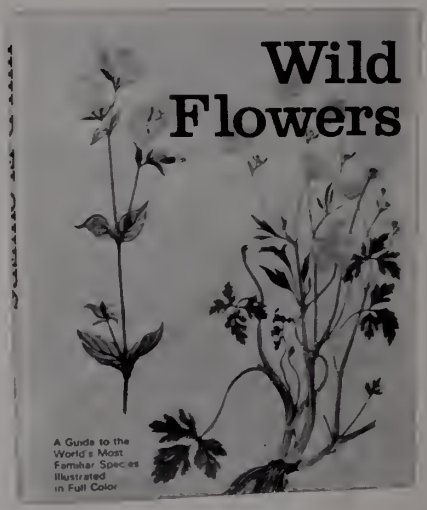
Our "pet project" has been that of maintaining a roadside area, begun by the club in 1970. The club at that time obtained the use of about 1/2 acre of land from Mrs. Willard Daughtrey. After removal of an old dwelling and two outbuildings, the club, with the assistance of the State Highway Department and the Nansemond Park Authority, established the picnic area, naming it "Willard's Grove" in honor of the owner. Members have shared in the park's upkeep through regular clean-up days, mowing, tree planting, and working through the Park Authority, obtaining additional tables and a grill. We are now in the process of procuring a sign designating the park as a memorial to the former owners of the land.

Another club project was the organization of the Holland Community Improvement Group in 1971, composed of churches and community organizations. This group received a Special Merit Award from Keep Virginia Beautiful in 1971 and this past year a first-place award for communities under 15,000. It also earned a Distinguished Service Citation in the Keep America Beautiful awards program.

Our 4-H Club was the recipient of the State Grange's Community Relations Award in 1973, as well as a special merit award from Keep America Beautiful.

We are very proud of our little group of 4-H'ers.

Mrs. Hunter Daughtrey, Adviser
Holland Windmill 4-H Club



A new book, *Wild Flowers* by Michael Stringer (Arco Publishing Company, 219 Park Avenue South, New York; $4.95), identifies some 60 species of wild flowers common the world over. Each is illustrated with a detailed, full-color drawing accompanied by descriptive text. If there is a special or interesting reason for a flower's name, or if it has an odd characteristic, the author explains.

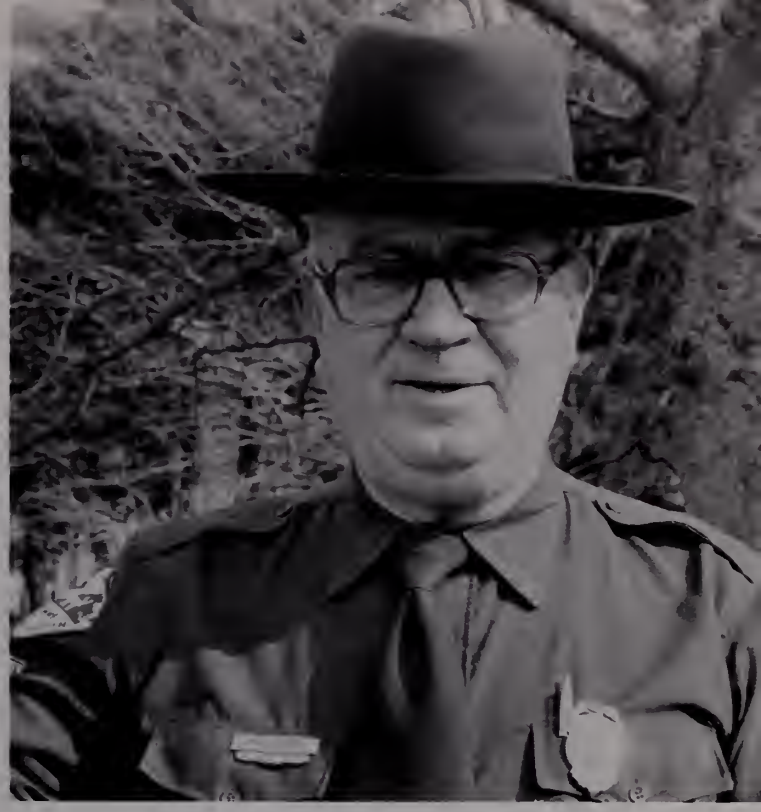
Not a botanical tome, the book does include simple basic information about the construction of flowers, the growing and flowering season of each species and the conditions under which it thrives. There is also a fascinating insight into how plants scatter their seeds and propagate themselves. *Wild Flowers* includes a brief glossary of the scientific terms used in the text and the end papers show details of various flower and leaf structures, and the different types of fruits, stems, shoots and roots.

Julie Drawdy, Junior Leader of Community Beautification, Holland Windmill 4-H Club, accepts Keep America Beautiful plaque from William R. Nash, Southern Regional Director, Keep America Beautiful, at the Keep Virginia Beautiful awards luncheon, John Marshall Hotel, Richmond, January 23, 1974.

Photograph by Dementi-Foster, Richmond

Know Your WARDENS

By F. N. SATTERLEE
Information Officer



Satterlee photo

Ambrose Preston, one of Virginia's early wardens, whose enthusiasm for the outdoors rubbed off on his son, Gordon.

GORDON T. PRESTON
Game Warden Retired

Gordon Preston is a native of Franklin County, Virginia. His father was a tobacco and cattle farmer. The senior Preston was also one of the early game wardens in the Commonwealth. Gordon remembers his father as a great hunter and outdoorsman and one who taught his seven children the value of things wild, hunting lore and sportsmanship. He remembers his training as a hunter consisted of years of just carrying game and learning until he had demonstrated the abilities his father required.

Following graduation from Rocky Mount High School, where he played basketball and pitched on the ball team, he worked for a time in the textile business. In 1943 he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, and during the following two years made numerous trips across the Atlantic Ocean, into the Mediterranean, and across the Pacific and back. One of the ships on which he was an electrician crew member was the Destroyer USS Varian.

Receiving his discharge in 1945 he worked at a number of jobs until, in October of 1946, he was employed as Virginia Game Warden and was assigned to Franklin County. This assignment he remembers well especially as he reflects back over the years. Gordon retired from the Commission on March 31, 1974, and to him one of the most rewarding aspects of his job was seeing the increase in game and fish as renewable resources for the sportsmen. When first he went to Franklin County there were no deer, no trout streams to speak of and no wild turkey: a far cry from the situation in that area today. Another facet of his work was the constant inspiration of working with youth. This was particularly true in the field of hunter safety training. According to Gordon, he has been at least partly responsible for the training of more than 5000 persons in this program.

Gordon and his wife, the former Jewell Tyree from Franklin County, live on their farm outside Rocky Mount, Virginia. Now that he is retired, Gordon plans to spend full time gardening, raising registered beagles, purebred Angus cattle and enjoying his beloved outdoors.

Edited by JIM KERRICK

A Landlubber Has No Excuse

Did you ever ask "Larry the Landlubber" why he didn't own a boat and receive his reply: "What would I do with a boat?"

Or, he may have said, "I don't have the money for a boat. I just can't afford it."

Or yet, this incredible "L.L." alibi, "A boat? When would I get a chance to enjoy a boat?"

Feeble excuses at best, but nevertheless that's what one hears. The Let's Go Boating Committee, whose main interest lies in attracting new people to boating, is concerned with educating as many people as possible about the fun of boating.

Not every landlubber is going to run out and buy a boat once he learns the thrills of ripping through the waves at 30 knots, sailing into the sun on an 18-foot sloop, or discovering new campsites along a nearby lake or river. But there are those who need that little push, who have to get their toes wet before they make the big plunge.

There is a boat for all types of people. Small sailing rigs that are right for one or two people, fully equipped with more fun and excitement than watching the longest TD pass or stuff shot. Sleek cruising sailboats, decked out with all the modern conveniences of home, can offer more excitement than watching a 400-foot home run.

Then there is the speedboat for those who love to zip across the water for their version of the seagoing Mario Andretti's and Richard Petty's. And, there are those boats geared to family activities: leisure cruising, offshore swimming, water skiing, picnicking and camping.

The answer to Larry's "what would I do with a boat?" all depends on you. What do you like to do?

Water-ski? There are many models designed for pulling even the heaviest of skiers. Fishing? There aren't many fishermen who get away for a weekend of casting and catching that don't have a boat.

Racing? More racing regattas every year are being scheduled for all types of boats: small sailboats, yachts, powerboats, you name it.

Exploring new waterways rekindles the old American pioneer spirit. Cruising on unfamiliar rivers, lakes, mountain areas, through valleys and along the coast is a way of living many of us have misplaced among our cars and computers.

When "L.L." says he can't afford a boat, it carries as much credibility as when he says he can't afford another suit because he owns fifteen pairs of shoes.

The fact is, most anyone can afford a boat. For a little over $300—the price of two packs of cigarettes a day for a year—you can add a lot of fun and clear air to a life used to boredom and short wind, and a hacking cough.

Small sailboats range in the vicinity of $100-$1000 depending on how elaborate a boat you wish to buy. Larger sailing craft start at about $2000.

Sportboats can be purchased for as little as $900 and a good sized engine for the same. For the price of one of those small import cars, an outboard can add a whole new exciting dimension to outdoor recreation. Cruisers are priced beginning at about $3000.

As to "when can I go boating," think of the times you spend sleeping in your backyard hammock, those 3:00 P.M. trips to the local bar, standing in long lines at the first tee, being glued to the television set watching bodies colliding on phony green turf.

There is nothing fake about inhaling clean air, having your hair tossed by a sea breeze, soaking in a sunny day.

Like the famous cola, boating is a "real thing." It's one of the few natural things left in this world.

Courtesy Bruno and Associates

Families don't always have to go sailing in the big cruising sailboats to enjoy the power of the wind. Small daysailers like this 12-foot craft are a popular model.

This six cylinder 115 Merc is offered with factory installed trim which provides the boater with remote push-button trimming. Excellent for skiing.

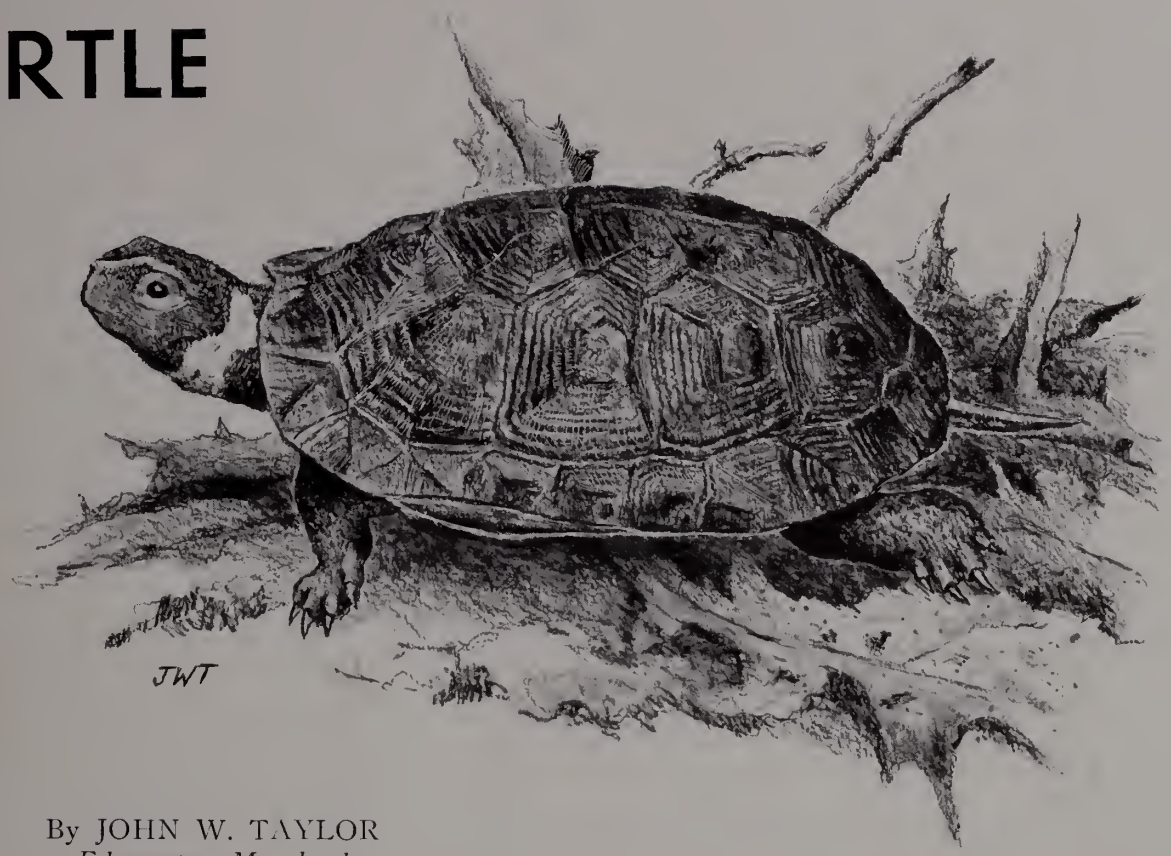
Courtesy Mercury Marine

Courtesy Mercury Marine

More and more outboard families, torn between the attractions of a family boat and camping vehicle, are solving their dilemma by purchasing a cruiser which doubles as a camper.

THE BOG TURTLE

Endangered Species Report



By JOHN W. TAYLOR
Edgewater, Maryland

LITTLE is known about the bog turtle. Of limited and spotty distribution, it offered few opportunities for study by early naturalists, and is now absent from localities where it once occurred. So most of the information about its behavior has been derived from specimens kept in captivity.

Its range, apparently disrupted by ancient geological changes, has been even more fragmented by swamp drainage and other human activities. There is a broad gap between known colonies in North Carolina and those in the Virginia Blue Ridge. Another hiatus separates populations in eastern and western Pennsylvania, and records from New York State are widely scattered. Though earlier recorded as far north as Rhode Island, it is found today only to Connecticut and eastern New York.

Individual bog turtles have been discovered along the Blue Ridge Parkway in southern Virginia, and recently several colonies have been discovered in Patrick, Floyd and Carroll Counties. Logically, they should be found anywhere there is suitable habitat in the Virginia highlands, since they are present in the Maryland counties just to the north.

Look for them in sphagnum bogs, wet meadows and along small streams. An abundance of grassy and mossy cover seems to be a requisite, and it has a tendency to burrow into the mud, even during the summer. It does not hesitate to travel overland, but confines its wanderings to swampy terrain.

This turtle is best identified by the conspicuous orange (or yellowish) blotch on the side of the head. The dark brown shell is slightly keeled, with strong concentric patterns. The lower shell (belly) is black, irregularly marked with yellow (sometimes tending to reddish). They are small, averaging only about 4″ in length.

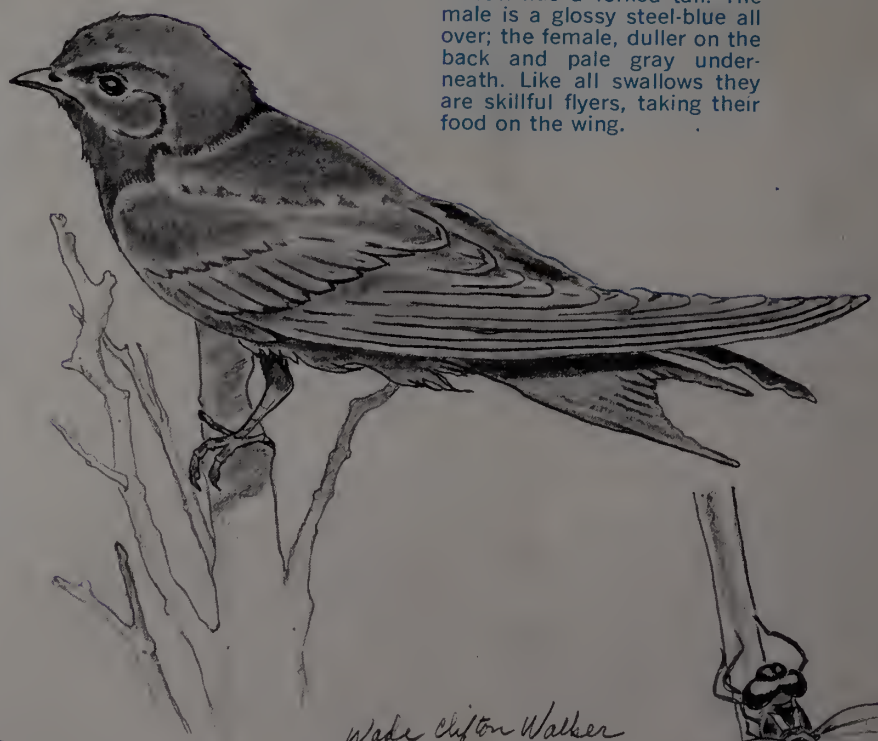
The bog turtle was first described in 1801, and was originally (and until recently) known as "Muhlenberg's" turtle, after the Rev. H. Ernest Muhlenberg, Lutheran minister, naturalist and first president of Franklin College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. It was even then an uncommon species, probably on the centuries-slow path to natural extinction. Man's manipulation of the natural landscape has hastened its doom.

THE PURPLE MARTIN

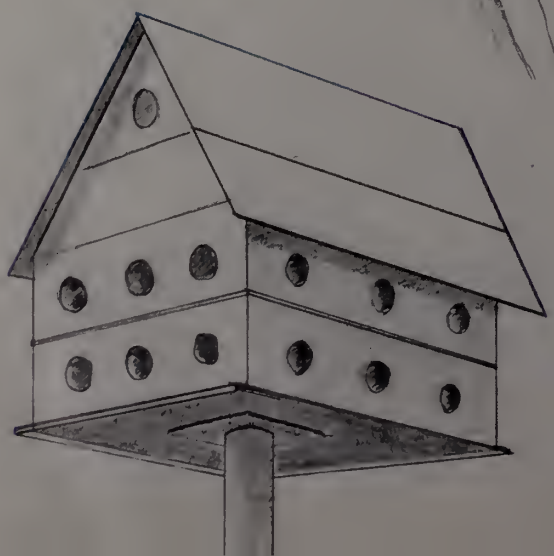
Largest of the swallows that come to Virginia, the purple martin has a forked tail. The male is a glossy steel-blue all over; the female, duller on the back and pale gray underneath. Like all swallows they are skillful flyers, taking their food on the wing.

Arriving in February, martin scouts seek suitable housing for the colony of birds to follow. Preferring fields and other open areas for their free wheeling maneuvers, they like to be near water. This bird nests in a hole, sometimes in a natural cavity, but now much more commonly in cavities about buildings or in a nest box prepared for it. Martins often fill every section of a multiple bird house or every gourd in a group hung on crossbars or poles. Their homes need to be at least 10 feet off the ground on poles which cats and other predators can't climb.

Nesting begins in April or May. Nests are composed of grasses and feathers, sometimes with a base of mud. Four to six is the usual number of white eggs in a clutch. Incubation requires a couple of weeks; young will stay in the nest another 3 to 4 weeks. During this period incredible numbers of insects are consumed by the martin family.



Wade Clifton Walker



While martins capture some useful dragonflies, they eat quantities of mosquitoes, flies, squash bugs, weevils and other insects harmful to our crops. (Some say the martin can eat its weight in insects each day.)

Vast flocks are formed during August and September, and the birds head south again to their wintering grounds in Brazil.